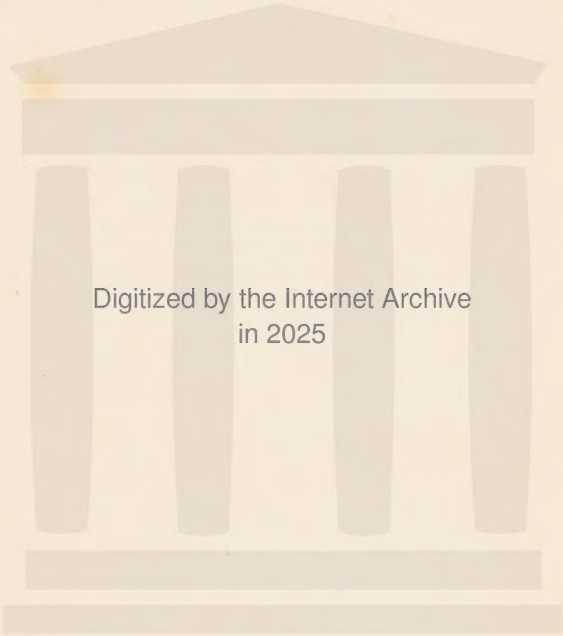
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DE VAVASOUR:

A TALE

OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

A true knight!
Not yet mature, yet matchless: firm of word;
Speaking in deeds, and deedless in his tongue;
His heart and hand both open, and both free;
For what he has, he gives—what thinks, he shows:
Yet gives he not till judgment guide his bounty,
Nor dignifies an impure thought with breath.

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

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DE VAVASOUR.

CHAP. I.

THE COURT OF PEERS.

The princes and peers of France being assembled in court, the ambassadors of England were introduced by Reginald, who briefly stated the result of his mission, and the determination of Edward to reply through certain of his nobles specially appointed. Report did say that, to gain his point, Edward had left nothing unessayed; that gold had been promised, and given; and that it was difficult to say which were the greater, the largesses or the promises,—most people, however, considering the latter to have considerably the advantage. The

senior ambassador on the part of England commenced the discussion:—

"I come here, noble and illustrious peers of France, on the part of Edward, the son of Isabel, to claim, in right of his mother, the regency of the kingdom, as next heir to the throne. I may be told that the Salique law excludes females from succession, on account of the feebleness of their sex; but the intention of that law was not to transfer the direct right of inheritance to a more distant branch. Admitting that Queen Isabel has not a claim in her own proper person to the crown, yet I contend that she can give the right of priority to her heir male. Edward is the nearest heir, being nephew to the deceased king; while Philippe of Valois is only cousin german: therefore the crown belongs to Edward as next of kin."

Robert of Artois, in a most forcible speech, supported the claim of Philippe. "Since the commencement of the French monarchy," said he, "there has not been an instance of a female succeeding to the throne. Let us look for precedents

in the ancient times of our history, and we find, in the sixth century, two females set aside, and two princes of a more distant line called to the throne. We see the same thing occurring shortly afterwards; and, to be brief, from that day to this present time, no female has inherited. It is not, however, from the feebleness of their sex that females are prohibited from reigning, for, in that case, they would not be admissible to the regency; but to prevent the descendants of foreign princes from sitting on the throne of France. The law expressly says, ' Ad virilem sexum hæreditas pertineat;' and Philippe is in the direct line from St. Louis. We will now come to the claim of King Edward to the regency, as nearest by female succession; and we find two princes born in the collateral line, both by father and mother, from the royal stock of France, and consequently nearer in all respects than the king of England. Confide in me, peers and princes of France, and in the justice of my declaration, when I affirm that the French nation will support the claims of Philippe, founded on the right of birth and the decision of

Charles. Be content, therefore, king of England, to acknowledge the legitimate heir as regent of France."

The barons decided unanimously in favor of the house of Valois, and the ambassadors returned to England. Edward called a parliament at Northampton, and complained of the injustice with which he had been treated.

The queen of France having produced a female child, Philippe the VIth was proclaimed king, and crowned, together with his queen, at Rheims, with a magnificence until then without example. The fêtes lasted fourteen days. After the return of the court to Paris, Louis Count of Flanders arrived to do homage, and to demand protection against his rebel subjects, who had driven him from his territory. Many of the peers wished to dissuade the king from such an enterprise, knowing how much the French hated these Flemish wars; but Robert of Artois was desirous that Philippe should strike a blow, and prove to the French nation that he possessed both personal valour and military skill.

Reginald was anxious to display his own prowess; and the Bishop of Arras, now keeper of the seals, had certain private reasons for wishing to see his friend busily employed on matters of glory and danger. Philippe himself was inclined to active measures; and, turning to Chatillon, constable of France, demanded his opinion, and whether it would not be advisable to wait a more favorable opportunity. The laconic answer of the old soldier decided the question: "Sire, qui a bon cœur, a toujours le temps à propos." Philippe embraced him, and exclaimed, "Qui m'aime me suive." Orders were immediately sent to assemble the troops under the walls of Arras on the day of La Magdeleine.

CHAP. II.

A SURPRISE.

MADAME de Cominges Leontin quitted Paris soon after her last conversation with his excellency of Arras, entrusting him with a letter for Reginald, to be delivered on his return to France. "If," said she, "the knight returns unwedded, deliver him this; if, on the contrary, he brings with him the envied (I will not say detested) Countess of Hainault,—let him not know that I have humiliated myself so far as to offer explanation."

The cautious prelate duly promised; and in the hope and conviction that the interests of Reginald, as well as his own, would be brought to a favorable issue by the expected marriage, placed the interesting packet in his most private repository. So carefully was the treasure concealed, that when Reginald arrived, the bishop could not himself discover it: thus the knight remained

in ignorance of all matters relative to his offended mistress.

Reginald received a summons to attend Robert d'Artois. "Your conduct, my young friend, has been highly satisfactory to the king, and he has offered you a command in the army near his own person. We have done well in pushing these matters forward; and if Philippe gains a name as well as a crown by my means, I may confidently look to a return. You remember our conversation with King Charles on the subject of Artois?"

"Perfectly," replied De Vavasour.

"I may hereafter appeal to you on this subject," rejoined the prince. "For the present, employ yourself diligently; and, as the war in Guienne procured you a mistress, so may this in Flanders secure you a wife. Give your orders to your seneschals, and hasten to your embassy at Avignon: Philippe will require all that was promised to Charles. Beware of our friend, the keeper of the seals."

Without visiting the bishop, Reginald set off for Avignon, uncertain what conduct he ought to

pursue towards Cecile. "Let what will happen," exclaimed he, "the proud damsel shall not know I have been refused attention by one still prouder. Matilde may seek a slave elsewhere: Reginald will pursue one, that as yet has not frowned on him."

The ambassador and his secretary arrived at Vienne without impediment, where they were affectionately received. The Primate gave Lorenzo the command of the troops destined for the campaign in Flanders.

On arriving at Avignon, Reginald demanded audience, and was admitted to the presence of the Pope, who avowed his gratitude for the zeal with which his rights had been defended.

Petrarch was absent, and Reginald wished until the latest moment to remain in privacy. He therefore entered the château of Villeneuve without parade or ceremony; and, unlocking a door which led to his own suite of apartments, entered that which was his favorite. Imagine his surprise, when he heard,— "You then are not married?—you received my letter, and forgive me?"

"Do I behold Mademoiselle de Cominges?"

"I am now Madame de Leontin."

"Then you are married, Cecile!"

"No, not exactly married, nor am I to marry for some months: but we will talk of that tiresome word marriage another time; let us now talk of love."

How long the conversation lasted upon so agreeable a topic, our readers must guess; we can only say, that it ended in canvassing the projected expedition by the personal orders of the king.

"Has your activity, Sir Reginald, no other stimulus than obedience to Philippe, or the love of warfare? Do you not look forward to the day when you yourself will be a prince of that country?"

"My first object is to serve France, and then to serve John in Italy."

"Your objects are very chivalrous, and, like crusades, will probably gain you more suffering than glory. You have been in England, you have seen Matilde, and you have returned unmarried. Perhaps you are affianced; have kissed the same cross, told the same beads, broken a golden

ring, and vowed eternal constancy!—Is it so?"

Reginald remained silent.

"Come, come," continued his mistress, "be candid: imitate your friend Petrarch, and acknowledge your passion. If it were not for that avowal for Laura, I verily believe he would raise the standard with the Roman eagle, and preach a crusade for Italian liberty: one hour he speaks of the darts and bow of Cupid; and in the next, of the spear and shield of Mars. For my part, I cannot help recollecting what a delightful person Venus must have been; but Venus, or I should more properly say, Hymen, has not been propitious? Come, tell me all! I sent to you on your way. How fared you? Still silent?"

Reginald, thus pressed, related all that had passed.

"And so, sir knight, you thought of succeeding through another, when you had failed in propria persona! Heavens! what a child, or lover, you must have grown! Thinkest thou a certain knight would have succeeded elsewhere, if he had sent a poet to inquire in what corner of such or such a

lady's fair form her heart lay? Take my advice, Reginald! in affairs of love or marriage, come to close quarters. Fight for the heart as you did for the victory at Saintes. A lover and a warrior should use the same motto,—'Nil desperandum.' Am I not right in supposing this new effort to be probationary?"

"Wherever a banner flies, mine shall appear. The king has appointed me to high honors; and if I survive the field of war in Flanders, it is to Italy I look with the fondest expectations. Whenever I think of my expulsion from Rome, my heart leaps like a tiger willing to escape from the prison in which he is confined."

Reginald strode up and down the apartment; and Cecile, anxious to soothe him, said, "Your nerves have been overstrung; you require sleep; I will not tell my father that the right owner of the mansion is returned, but I will send your page to attend his master. Good night!"

The fury of the moment passed, but Cecile was gone.

Reginald threw himself on his couch, and was

soon asleep. In his dreams he accused Matilde of coldness, raved of the beauty of Cecile, wished she were the mistress of his destiny, the companion of his toils, the sharer of his pleasures, and the partner of his glory. Every wish that he expressed had its effect; as seamen say, every shot told. Reginald awoke, and perceived a page; but to his surprise, that page was Cecile.

"By your dreams," said she, "I have learnt that the Lady of the Rose is not forgotten. She does not forget her first passion: when Reginald is present, she thinks of nothing but him. Let him not make protestations; they are vain: let him not make offers; none will be accepted that are injurious: but while Madame de Leontin can command herself, let Reginald command her, as he did the weak, fond fool, Cecile!"

CHAP. III.

THE ORIFLAMME.

During the absence of Reginald, Philippe prepared for war in a manner almost monastically devout: he attended churches and hospitals; gave alms to the poor; kissed their hands, and served them at table. Perhaps the king might have better inspired his own army, and intimidated that of his opponents, by encouraging martial exercises, and proclaiming jousts and tournaments: but Philippe was of a different opinion; and, as he was king, there were few persons who would differ from him. The Bishop of Arras, perceiving the disposition of the king, recommended him to display the Oriflamme of France, which, like the standard of the prophet, must carry with it obedience and success. The nobles and knights, who would have laughed at seeing a king preparing for war by submitting to perform the actions of a menial in a

poor-house, were absent, collecting their forces, and marching towards Arras. The Pope sent a cardinal, as his legate, to bestow an especial benediction : the relics of saints and martyrs were placed before the high altar of St. Denis ; and the Bishop of Arras advancing, delivered, with other prelates, the Oriflamme to the king. The grand butler of France stepped forth, and, taking the oath prescribed, received the sacred deposit. The king descended to the tomb of the saints, and there offered up his prayers. The spectacle was conducted in an imposing and religious manner ; and Philippe, accompanied by Robert d'Artois, and the bishop, keeper of the seals, departed for Arras, amid the loudly-expressed blessings and wishes of his good citizens of Paris.

Reginald had arrived in time to be present at the ceremony, which he regarded as more suited to monkish than to regal usage : but whatever his opinions were, he kept them secret within his own breast.

On the morning after his arrival at the episcopal palace of Arras, Reginald took a survey of the

troops surrounding the city: he visited the quarters of the Kings of Bohemia and Navarre, of the Dukes of Bourbon, Lorraine, and Bretagne, of the Counts of Hainault, Flanders, and Cassel; and, lastly, arrived at those of the Dauphin. Having passed the lines, he met Robert d'Artois.

"What think you, Reginald," inquired the prince, "of our prospects of success?"

"The Oriflamme has been displayed," answered De Vavasour, in a tone of raillery: "France must conquer."

"True, true," replied D'Artois; "the king thinks more of the minutiæ of religion than of military discipline: but will not the semblance of devotion cover a multitude of offences?"

"The troops of France," rejoined our hero, "will not desert the Oriflamme."

Robert d'Artois and Reginald then rode towards the palace to partake of the bishop's hospitality.

CHAP. IV.

THE BATTLE OF CASSEL.

THE insurgents posted in Cassel were neither formidable in numbers, appointments, nor military conduct, and their leader was a seller of fish, called Zannequin: his want of skill, however, was supplied by courage, hardiness, and audacity. On the summit of the hill, which commands such an immensity of view, Zannequin had entrenched himself, and hoisted his standard, with a cock painted on it, with this motto underneath:—

> " Quand ce coq chante aura,
> Le Roi Cassel conquera."

Zannequin laughed at Philippe, whom he called " Le Roi trouvé;" and encouraged his men to work hard at the fortifications, and sharpen their swords and daggers. He discovered that the royal troops loved eating, drinking, gaming, and sleeping, more than military duty; and determined, on the day

before St. Bartholomew, to make his attack. He divided his army into three parties; and, at the head of the picked men, Zannequin led the way to the tent of the king.

The Chevalier Renaud de l'Or, thinking the advancing party belonged to the French army, accused them of disturbing the sleep of their friends: he was struck dead. The soldiers flew to arms. The disorder increased every moment. The king's confessor hastened to Philippe, entreating him to arm; but the monarch laughed at his fears: the chief butler's report, however, assured Philippe of his danger. Neither knight nor esquire could be found, and the clerks of the chapel were obliged to assist the king to arm.

"Now," exclaimed Philippe, "let us lead to the attack. Where are my body guards? Where is Sir Reginald?"

Neither guards nor Reginald appeared; and Philippe was compelled to retire, and fix the royal standard on a rising ground near the extremity of the encampment.

When Reginald saw the standard, he galloped

towards it. Near the king stood Robert d'Artois, and around them a small body of knights was stationed. The shouts of the victorious assailants grew louder and louder. Knights galloped in all directions towards the royal standard.

"Chevaliers," cried Reginald, "now is the time to prove yourselves worthy of the name of Frenchmen! A vile slave, a rebel, a paltry vender of fish, dares contend against the King of France and his noble allies. These daring men have entered your ranks, while your troops, shame on them! indulged in repose; but it is the duty of knights to remedy the evils brought on by the ignorance or carelessness of hinds, and to oppose villains, caitiffs who bear arms, but are not soldiers. Form, form! Bear your lances firm! Rein up your horses! Now, Chevaliers, now!"

The charge was tremendous. In vain did Zannequin oppose his courage to superior skill: the spear of Reginald was driven through his body; and, as he fell, the troops assembling round shouted "Victory!" Robert d'Artois had placed himself at the head of the left wing, and prevented

the insurgents from escaping. The field was *one* scene of slaughter. Philippe, on re-entering his tent, ordered "Te Deum" to be sung.

Before retiring from Flanders, the king thus addressed the Count who had sought his aid: "Cousin, I have complied with your entreaties: I have taken hostages from your towns; I have destroyed their fortifications. It is possible, however, that your own mismanagement has caused this revolt. I have been obliged to make great pecuniary sacrifices, and might claim remuneration; but I disdain to do so, and give you up your state pacified and submissive. Take good care, and do not again require our assistance; for if we come a second time, it shall be less for your advantage than our own."

On arriving at Paris, the king, attended by Robert d'Artois, Reginald, and a great cortège of nobles, rode into the church of Notre Dame de Chartres, armed and mounted as at the battle of Cassel, and, in obedience to his vow, offered up his horse and arms in gratitude for his escape from imminent danger.

CHAP. V.

CONGRATULATIONS.

In compliance with the wishes of Robert d'Artois, who declared that it was a duty he owed to the family of Hainault, to be the earliest announcer of good tidings, Reginald had written to the Countess Matilde:

"I do not imagine, Madame," said he, "that a soldier's pen can dictate any thing worthy of the notice of a beautiful lady devoted to useful study and pleasing accomplishments; but I cannot refrain from announcing the restoration of tranquillity in Flanders, which establishes the rights of your friends, as well as of society in general.

"That you, Madame, may long enjoy that happiness, which all who have the honor of your acquaintance must fervently hope will continue, is the sincere prayer of your devoted slave,

"REGINALD DE VAVASOUR."

His letter to King Edward contained military details, with which we need not meddle; but we may quote the following:—"The ardor generally manifested by the troops marching towards Flanders had given sanguine hopes of success, which were, however, damped by subsequent misconduct. The camp was a scene of gaiety, intemperance, and confusion; the sentinels were careless of their duty; the outposts were insecure; and the officers of different watches under no positive control: each reported to his own chief alone. The army was of fine materials, but its component parts were ill united: there seemed no point of contact. The king endeavoured to maintain discipline and propriety; he established near his tent a place of worship, and was himself most constant in his devotions. The leaders of the army not only neglected those ceremonies, but were more occupied with visiting the neighbouring country, and partaking of the festivities of the table, than with drilling or exercising their troops: the chief of the insurgents saw this weakness, and profited by it. Fortunately for the sovereigns of

Europe, the daring attempt did not succeed. If an army composed of the flower of France, its vassals, and allies, could not have withstood a band of fishermen and peasants; those who now live in peaceable submission might have been stimulated to enterprises less daring, and might have been equally successful. The time selected for this assault was one of fancied security. Commanding the chosen knights, my duty was to be near the tent of the king; but, finding that the knights of the guard had left their posts, I rode through the camp to bring them back to their duty. In my absence, the king was forced to retire from his quarters; and, with a few knights of Hainault, I flew to join the royal standard." The reader is acquainted with the finale.

Matilde commented upon the letter she had received with a feeling of inward mortification.

"Devoted slave!" repeated she; "yes, but to Cecile, and not Matilde!"

King Edward interrupted these thoughts by saying,—"What thinks our fair cousin of De Vavasour's new exploit? Did the beauty of the lady

Matilde encourage the young hero of France to save Flanders from fishermen?"

"The danger was greater than you imagine, King Edward," replied the maiden; "but the encouragement was not mine."

"Not yours, forsooth! Did you not encourage the stranger knight, to the discouragement of our princely brother? Well, well, Matilde, no matter; we cannot command our hearts: tastes will differ; and you may prefer a healthy youth, who can win or save kingdoms, to a sickly prince, who cannot even meet the hardihood of a mock fight. We congratulate you on your choice!"

CHAP. VI.

NICHOLAS THE FIFTH.

ALTHOUGH we have, for the sake of brevity, and in the desire of not fatiguing our readers, passed over the affairs of Flanders with a degree of lightness very unsuitable to their character,—yet we are well aware that they were not thought lightly of by the potentates of Europe. Not only were the eyes of King Edward and of the Pope directed to this point, but also those of the Emperor of Germany. Louis had no wish to see physical force triumph over law; neither did he desire that infuriate mobs should tread on royal retinues. Whatever opinions he might have as to relative degrees of power,—yet it was power, and power of the highest order, which Louis of Bavaria aimed at. The information which Reginald received induced him to demand the king's permission to leave Paris; and he was allowed to

depart, without thanks or reward. His ambitious soul mounted high in air, with the expectation of obtaining fresh glory; and his hopes of the future consoled him for the evils of the present. The fact was, that the king felt deeply offended at his absence on the commencement of the attack, and regretted that Reginald was subsequently the cause of success. Philippe wished that Robert d'Artois had been the chosen instrument for his safety and glory. Robert perceived the change in the king's sentiments, and communicated his thoughts to the Bishop of Arras. "Your excellency knows," said he, "that Philippe is easily offended; but he does not stand on ground sufficiently strong to vent his anger on our young soldier of fortune. If Reginald returns successful from his present enterprise, backed by the friendship of the Pope and of King Edward, he may defy our gracious monarch; but, for the sake of France, I hope that day will not arrive."

Reginald pursued his course till he arrived at Roussillon, where all his friends were assembled, and where he learnt from the primate that there

was news from Italy of great importance. Reginald demanded the nature of the news, so that by the information given he might be guided.

"The Emperor Louis," answered his highness, "has been crowned at Rome: he has published a decree against heresy and leze-majesty, which has a retrospective power. Louis has subsequently published a decree, in which he accuses Pope John of simony and avarice; of not succouring the Christians against the infidels; of employing French galleys against the Genoese, the emperor's friends; of assuming imperial as well as sacerdotal power, while the Canonists declare the Pope cannot have both jurisdictions; of withdrawing his personal residence from Rome, and preaching a crusade against Romans, as if they were infidels. 'For these reasons,' said Louis, 'we are determined to use the power entrusted unto us, to punish the wicked as well as to reward the good, as St. Peter saith; and to use the weapon which we carry not in vain, as saith St. Paul: we will therefore follow the example of Otho, who deposed John the Twelfth; and, finding Jaques de

Cahors, called John the Twenty-Second, guilty of heresy by his writings and doctrines, and of leze-majesty by his proceedings against our person and dignity;—we do hereby depose him from the bishopric of Rome, and deliver him to the secular power, to be punished as a heretic.'"

"Take good care, Emperor of Germany," said Reginald; "there are other swords besides thine and St. Paul's; and, by St. Peter, I swear that mine shall revenge any insult offered to John the Twenty-Second: as for these idle decrees, they are words,—mere words,—empty words."

"This is not all, my son," replied the primate; "Giacomo Colonna, in the fire of youth and zeal for the service of the Pope, went to the Place de Marcel, and, in the presence of a thousand Romans, read a bull of the Pope's which none had dared to publish, and in which Louis and his adherents were excommunicated: Giacomo then leaped on a fleet horse, and galloped to his father's house in Palestrine. On this, the emperor published a law, making Rome the place of residence for the popes; and John having refused to reside

there, Louis passed sentence of death upon him, and named Pietro Rainalluci his successor, as Nicholas the Fifth."

"Signor Pietro," exclaimed De Vavasour, "look sharply to your throne, for St. Peter himself shall not prevent my hurling you from it: but pardon me, my friend, for my intemperance; I am not used to be a braggart. I must be gone. My troops are ready for embarkation: my vessels lie at Marseilles with flapping pennons, waiting their tardy master. Farewell, Agenor! farewell, Lady Aurélie!—but where is the Lady Rosalie?"

"A depression of spirits for the unaccountable absence of her husband confines her to her apartment," answered Aurélie.

Reginald smiled at the wife's sorrow for so careless a husband, but attributed it to amiability of nature.

"I wish a moment's confidence, Sir Reginald," said Aurélie.

"The Lady Aurélie may command her knight."

CHAP. VII.

AN AVOWAL.

On entering the retiring-room of the Lady Aurélie, she said, "I am about to be guilty of a breach of confidence, Sir Reginald; but the communication which I have to make is so connected with the interest of my husband, that I cannot refrain from showing you this letter ere you depart for Avignon." Reginald looked with surprise at the signature, and read as follows:—

"To the Countess de Roussillon:—

"Absence from those we love, or ought to love, sometimes produces forgetfulness; but more frequently we find our value greater for that which we do not possess than for those blessings we enjoy. Were you present, I could not love you more than I do, for your goodness of heart, your attachment and devotion to my brother, and your

avowed affection for me. It has been my misfortune to have been treated with too much kindness. The illness of my dear aunt has prevented her from watching over my failings: when her sensible mind possessed its powers, the affection she felt was too great to permit the violence or follies of childhood to receive the correction which they merited. My beloved kinswoman is so devoted to her husband, and so occupied with his cares and his pleasures, that I have been allowed to pursue my studies without a proper monitress; and the natural pride of my character has, I fear, grown into insupportable hauteur, by the self-conviction that I know more than falls to the lot of most females of my age. Having given this preliminary description of my natural and acquired habits, I must avow, that I fear those habits have driven from me one, in whom you and my brother take so warm an interest. You have explained to me, with a kindness at once sisterly, and maidenly modest, the wishes entertained by my brother, as well as my father;—wishes originating in gratitude, cemented by friendship, and con-

firmed by the strongest conviction of the existence of high principles of honor, courage, loyalty, and truth. From books which I have read, and from objects which do not quite escape the view even of one so little acquainted with the world as myself, I know that I must not expect to be equally fortunate with my beloved cousin Philippa, who was the first to create a flame in the breast of her Edward; nor to hear a young knight praised for that virtue which is the chief ornament of our sex. They tell me a knight of France is considered virtuous, if he is faithful to the lady whose colours he wears. If I consulted my heart, I should certainly find there a strong latent wish to meet with that reciprocity of feeling which conduces to a happy union, as well as to share the transports of a first love; but mortals are not born for a plenitude of enjoyment, and we must taste the cup as it is presented,—bitters mixed with sweets. I acknowledge myself a predestinarian, and my destiny has been foretold. The knight who presented me with the gift of Pope John, is my des-

tined lord: he has since fought for the cause of the house of Hainault, and deserves to be rewarded by one of the members of that family. I have also been told, that my destined lord would soon return to our court in an attitude of menace. God forbid that he should join in any enterprise against the life and honor of King Edward: if he were to do so, and the impression he had made were ten times stronger than I admit it to be, I would tear it from my heart, and root out from my memory all traces of so odious a person. I have ventured to enclose a little billet, in answer to a letter sent to me from Cassel: deliver it, when you see the victorious knight; mentioning to Agenor alone, that I have been so weak as to feel pleasure in hearing from, and so little reserved as to take pleasure in addressing, one who is almost unknown to me. My excuse must be, that I look at his merits through your eyes. So says

"Your affectionate sister,

"MATILDE of Hainault."

Reginald received, with bended knee, the young Countess's billet, and kissed it, as well as the hand which gave it. The contents were simple thanks for his exertions in the cause of her country, and expressions of the pleasure she felt in hearing that the sworn friend of her brother was safe. Reginald retired to his apartment, and wrote as follows:—"I cannot find words to express my gratitude for the amiable condescension of the Countess Matilde. My beloved friends, your brother and sister, have encouraged me to hope that the day may come when my poor services against those traitorous and audacious peasants will be richly rewarded. There is a reward to which I have long looked, although it may appear presumptuous to expect the attainment of my hopes. I am about to depart for Italy, and cannot but be aware that there is more danger to be apprehended from the troops and partisans of Louis, than from an infuriated mob, led by a desperado. Louis is a brave and experienced soldier: he has an army accustomed to active service, and the troops opposed to them are of a very different character

from those led into Flanders by King Philippe. Yet I feel a confidence that my destiny is not to be fulfilled upon the classic soil of fair Italia; and I hope to return, and sue for the mercy of the beauteous Countess Matilde.

"REGINALD, Marquis of Montserrent,
&c. &c. &c."

CHAP. VIII.

AN UNEXPECTED GREETING.

REGINALD thought of nothing but Matilde and marriage, until his arrival at Villeneuve; but that castle reminded him of past days and pleasures. There he expected to meet Cecile in all her bloom of captivation, and willing as readily to pardon his last hasty desertion, as his departure for Paris, and even England, in contradiction to her high commands: but our knight was disappointed. The Count de Cominges was in attendance, expecting his arrival.

"His Holiness the Pope," said the pedant, "is too much indisposed to receive even me, although I had composed a Latin dissertation on the vanity of human wishes, and the instability of human power."

"Did His Holiness, Monsieur le Comte," said our hero, "refuse to listen to such agreeable and useful topics?"

"I told Signor Petrarca, his private secretary, that I knew His Holiness sufficiently well to be assured that my humble essay would improve his spirits, and shortly ameliorate his health."

"What was the Signor's reply?"

"He used the word 'Gia.'"

"Where is your daughter, Monsieur le Comte?"

"My daughter, Monsieur le Marquis, is an altered woman: she has given up study, thinks of nothing but fine dresses, and a crowd of young flatterers. O! she is much changed, and thinks no more of Homer than I do of ——"

"I must see her."

"If your Excellency must see her, we must walk towards my house."

After some delay, and considerable interchange of messages, Reginald was admitted to the private apartment of Cecile.

"I ought to apologize for delaying to receive your Excellency," said she; "but sad tidings have reached me. My brother, who inherited, in right of his mother, the title and estates of the Vicomte de Turenne, is dead; and I, as only existing child, succeed to the vacant honors and fortune: it will surprise the Count de Cominges, to whom I was writing on the subject:" and Cecile, as she spoke, handed to Reginald the following note:—

"I have to communicate to you the painful intelligence of my brother's sudden death, and to inform you that I must in two days set off for his château.

"La Vicomtesse de Turenne."

"I will not, however," continued the lady, "neglect the offices of friendship; and shall tomorrow ride to the Château de l'Isle. Is it your pleasure, Monsieur le Marquis, to accompany me?"

Reginald wished to say "Most willingly;" but the words adhered to his lips, and while they moved, he bowed his head in assent. After some minutes passed in cold remarks, Reginald took his leave.

"I have well punished my truant knight," exclaimed Cecile: "how disappointed he looked! what a triumph to bring down his proud air, which always seems to say, 'I know you love me, and will continue to love me, let me do what I like!' But, Sir Reginald, for once you are received coldly: and if I can keep up the character as I have begun, I shall have him galloping after me to Turenne. Perhaps now Reginald may offer to marry the rich heiress. If he does, shall I refuse him, to gratify my pride;—or shall I accept his offer, to punish him for all former offences, and play the tyrant? Stay, Cecile, stay! Reginald will not desert his word, and the Vicomtesse de Turenne is not worthy of his choice."

CHAP. IX.

AN UNEXPECTED REQUEST.

On arriving at the Château de l'Isle, Reginald and Cecile were surprised to find the fair object of Petrarch's passion in conversation with Eleonore, and still more surprised when they heard the occasion of this visit. "I have accidentally," said Madame de Sade, "learned that there formerly existed a great friendship, if it did not amount to a stronger sentiment, between you, Madame de l'Isle, and a handsome and amiable young man, who, unfortunately for himself, and unjustly towards you, has conceived a violent attachment for another: the object of his choice cannot return his affection; and the want of that return seems to prey upon his spirits and injure his health. I can assure the Countess de l'Isle that the lady so selected is not vain enough of her attractions, to prevent her from knowing that others exist who

have equal, if not superior charms; and here, in the presence of those who are the warm friends of Petrarch, I entreat of you to endeavour to regain that portion of his friendship, esteem, and perhaps affection, which it is believed you once possessed. If his passion be that sort of madness which must exhaust itself in verses, let the young man write as many as he pleases, and let him imagine the person an angel who is nothing more than mere woman."

Extraordinary as this appeal may appear, it was very evident to Cecile that there would be no reluctance manifested by Eleonore: Cecile pitied, but could not advise the latter so far to forget the dignity of her sex as to seek the affections of a man avowedly devoted to another. Reginald felt for Eleonore: he was assured that no one ever had occupied, or probably ever would occupy, a place in her affections, but Petrarch. Agenor knew that Petrarch was devoted to the service of the church, although he had not taken priest's orders. They all, however, wished the marriage should take place, even with a clause that his

verses might continue to flow for Laura. A great difficulty, however, existed, which none seemed to have calculated on. For the first year Petrarch had thought of Laura only as an angel; but his angel had given birth to a smiling cherub, and the celestial spell had vanished: Petrarch now considered his angel as a woman, a beautiful composition of human flesh liable to human frailties; and for that frail composition he sighed. Reginald and Cecile wished, perhaps more than Laura, that Eleonore might acquiesce, and she was willing to do so; but the counsellors were reckoning without their host, for the lover was determined to live and die for Laura alone.

The day passed without a single display of love on the part of Cecile; and Reginald determined to leave Avignon, and accordingly alighted at the palace. He found Petrarch with His Holiness, arranging an answer to a letter which had arrived from Colonna with further favorable accounts: the letter was dated from the Castle of St. Angelo.

The delight of John was excessive. "We have sent various messengers for you, my son," said he

to Reginald; "here are great tidings! That heretic, Louis, has been driven from Rome. Hasten to our city, join your forces with those of our legate, and carry your spears to the northern extremity of Italy. Drive back the German to his barbarous forests. Here are your instructions, and here the means of carrying them into effect." John then presented him with two orders on his treasurer; the one to reimburse for past, the other to provide for future expenses. From the palace Reginald went to the Castle of Villeneuve, where he found the Count de Cominges employed in writing to the keeper of the seals. "The Pope has received glad tidings," said our hero; "Louis is driven from Rome, and the anti-pope retired to Viterbo. This night I leave Avignon. Now is your moment, if you have any point to carry: the Pope is in a most generous mood."

"Well observed," replied De Cominges; "I will instantly to His Holiness."

The Count, without further ceremony, set off for the palace, and Reginald for the Hôtel de Cominges.

When Cecile heard of his intended departure for Italy, some portion of former affection was manifested; but she conquered the sentiment, and said calmly, "Before you return, Sir Reginald, my year of widowhood will have expired, and I expect to be the wife of a Spanish prince. My sacrifice has been rewarded by the increased kindness of the Countess Aurélie, who now pities where she before condemned. I do not know that I am in reality a better person than I was, but at all events I am more the mistress of my passions. I could weep at thus parting, perhaps for ever, and could say you are still dear to me; but I will not betray a weakness you would despise."

"You wrong me, Cecile," answered her former lover; "I admire you for your resolution; I am grateful for your affection; I am conscious of your charms!"

"But you are destined to be the husband of another."

"It was prudent to remind me of that which your presence always makes me forget. You remember your quotation on marriage? Whether

we two should have been as happy in the wedded state as we have been,—I, for one, cannot divine; but certainly love can exist between husband and wife, as witness Agenor and Aurélie."

"You cannot place Rodolphe and Rosalie in the same beatific position."

"No, Cecile, but they are not matched, though mated. Rodolphe admires all womankind, from Angelina to Cecile: it is almost immaterial to him whether she be maid, wife, or widow: now Rosalie thinks only of that little love, angel, bijou, called an infant. Talking of a child and marriage reminds me of Eleonore. What think you of Laura's proposition?"

"That she means well, but proposes foolishly: for my part, I could almost beat the simpleton for grieving after that silly thing, a man; and that silliest of all men, Petrarch."

"But, Cecile, let us suppose for a minute that you were Laura, and that you looked kindly on Petrarch?"

"As I did on you, you mean to say, King Vanity! but Petrarch is not a daring knight; and

if he thought to win my heart with his verses, I would prove him a fool by throwing the nonsense at his head. Make me believe, if you can, that a man can live upon tears! I, a poor weak woman, require solid flesh and sparkling wine; and though perhaps a little too fond of the luxuries of the table, yet I learned that from you, my love!"

"And many other bad habits, I dare say: the only thing I can practise with tolerable success is the use of arms, and that I cannot teach you."

"And even in that you may be foiled. Recollect the pelting you received at Rome."

"If you touch upon that chord again, I will stop your mouth with ——"

"Pshaw!—Remember you are to marry Matilde."

CHAP. X.

ROMAN HONORS.

After a scene partly serious and partly comic, Reginald reluctantly tore himself from the beauty who had so often inspired his mind to daring projects, and whose smiles and caresses had rewarded him for his labors. With a heavy heart he left Avignon; and, sailing from Marseilles, made a rapid voyage to Civita Vecchia: there he landed his troops, and marched into the "Eternal City" at the head of a small but well-appointed band of warriors. The populace were delighted with the martial appearance of their newly-arrived defenders; and "Viva Papa Johannes!" re-echoed through the streets. Giacomo Colonna received his friend with open arms, and conducted him to the palace of his father, who was now senator of Rome. The leaders of the party which had before expelled him came to visit our hero, and to assure

him of their regret for past events, and of their present attachment to His Holiness: they were received with kindness, and assured of the forgiveness of the Pope. Two of the leaders ventured to press upon Reginald the propriety of urging the Pope to return to his capital, instead of living in the dominions of another sovereign. Reginald replied, that he would communicate their wishes, but would not promise to use any influence he might possess. "Indeed, citizens of Rome!" said he, "I will confess to you that it would be utterly against my inclination to advise an old man to adventure his person in a country so unhappily torn by intestine factions. When the Guelfs and Ghibellines unite for the true happiness and honor of Italy; when the Emperor Louis is compelled to acknowledge that the Pope alone has power in the temporal as well as spiritual affairs of the holy patrimony;—then the seat of government may be securely transferred to Rome: but while these parties exist, that one which is for the moment superior will endeavour to influence the holy Father in matters, his decision upon which

should spring from pure conviction of their truth and efficacy. At Avignon the Pope lives in tranquillity, and has leisure to reflect on plans for the general good; and to issue such decrees as his own wisdom, and the advice of learned men suggest, for the advancement of the interests of the church."

The leaders bit their lips and retired. Reginald then accompanied Giacomo to the senate, where he was received with marked honors, declared a citizen of Rome, and invested with a decoration of a golden eagle surmounted by a wreath of laurel: from the senate-house he was conducted to a splendid banquet; and in the evening was presented to the assembled beauties of Rome.

CHAP. XI.

PHYSIOGNOMY.

REGINALD paid a visit, with Giacomo Colonna, to Palestrine; but did not think it necessary to communicate his reasons for wishing to see the Temple of Fortune. Lorenzo was delighted with the Roman ladies, and selected one for his private adorations during his sojourn in Rome. Such arrangements in those days did not require much negotiation; and in a very short space of time the lover and the lady became well acquainted; and the Signora asked him whether it was true that Pope John had a seraglio. Lorenzo laughed immoderately at the idea, and wished to prove the folly, as well as falsehood, of such a report. The lady said, "As to the folly, I must own I cannot agree with you; for, were I Pope, I would have every thing in the world I liked: and, as the Pope cannot marry, but still must be a man;—and

as all men are fond of women, and also of variety, I would gratify my liking to my heart's content."

Lorenzo saw clearly that his Signora was not another Laura; and congtatulated himself upon his discrimination in selecting Julia Franceschi. "I never," said he, "was deceived in a face, and I saw devil in every line of her beautiful countenance: now I do like a good mixture of the satanic in a mistress: as for a wife, c'est tout autre chose. Commend me, in that case, to a Solomon in petticoats; a Susanna in a silken robe; or any thing like Aurélie:—but for a little loving foolery, Cecile de Cominges is perfection. Eleonore de l'Isle would make a good wife, but she is love-stricken with that mad poet: at the first instant I saw what would be his fate; and the first time I saw Sir Reginald, my honored leader, I was certain he would be as successful in his love affairs as poor Petrarch would be unhappy. Reginald likes to live on smiles; Franciscus to drink nothing but tears:—I would as soon drink salt water."

Thus Lorenzo catalogued his friends; and, in

running through the circle, he came to his mother. "Well, I must allow she is very handsome and very good; and I am not surprised that the Prince Primate should be devoted to such perfection. There is a countenance for you!"

CHAP. XII.

THE TEMPLE OF FORTUNE.

Reginald and Giacomo found every thing well arranged for their reception at the house of Stephano Colonna; and having well regaled themselves, awaited the rising of the moon. Leaving the house unperceived, Giacomo led the way to the ruins of the Temple of Fortune; and turning to the right, among some underwood Reginald perceived a flight of dilapidated steps: they descended, and entered a small grotto. Colonna took from his vest a lute, and played a wild Neapolitan air. This was replied to in a soft tone: a part of the ground appeared to recede,

and a cavern was discovered lighted by a lamp. Near to a square altar, raised upon two steps, sat a venerable figure in the habiliments of the ancient augurs. "I come, learned Aristobulus,' said Colonna, "to make known to you a chief of no ordinary merit;—one who has served with credit to himself and to his employers."

"Yes, Giacomo! he comes from the bloody field of Cassel, to receive the title of Germano: he comes here upon a special purpose," was the reply.

"It is true that he comes covered with laurels from Flanders," continued Colonna, "to gain fresh wreaths by the expulsion of Louis of Bavaria, that arch-enemy of the church, and that despiser of the noble art of astrology;—a study so useful, so enlightened, so serviceable to good purposes, and so ancient in its origin."

The sage, having examined his books, declared that the knight would be successful in his enterprise. "Your visit here," added he, turning to Reginald, "is not to consult me on your own destiny: you seem to have determined to be the

master of it yourself: but you come on the part of another; and you little imagine what the issue of that embassy will be, or you would not so lightly have offered your services. Giacomo, listen! This youth, disguised as he is, I know to be the victorious Reginald; and he comes to me from my brother Ethelred, in England, to propose a contract of marriage."

"Learned Aristobulus," said Reginald, "you have divined rightly: the Saxon is of a long descent of sons of the stars, and he dreads the extinction of his ancient name and line."

"The stars have assigned him my daughter," cries the astrologer.

"Your daughter?" said Giacomo.

"Yes, Bishop that is to be, my daughter: last night I made my calculations, and I find the prophecy of her mother is true, and her hour is come. I will show you the lover, and the intended bride." Aristobulus touched with his wand a drapery, which opening, disclosed the gigantic skin-clad Saxon. Giacomo started. Reginald said, "Yes, that is Ethelred, descended from a king of

the West Saxons; and, although he looks like Hercules about to oppose the Nemæan lion, yet he is of mild character, and I have undertaken to procure him a wife."

"Behold her!" exclaimed Aristobulus. The sage touched another piece of drapery, and Reginald saw a figure which thrilled him with astonishment.

"The wife of Jove!" shouted our hero.

"The sister of Mars!" cried Giacomo.

The female figure, if alive, did not move: the complexion was a clear brown, the hair black, and the eyes dark and sparkling. The male figure was tall and commanding. Giacomo remarked, "What a figure for a bridegroom! he will not require page, esquire, or chamberlain, to prepare him for the marriage-bed." The drapery closed, but the lady was still present.

Aristobulus proceeded: "Now, see what transformation beauty can produce." The curtain was again thrown back, and they saw the form and features of Ethelred; but how changed! His curling locks were bound by a golden fillet, which

passed across his brow, and from which depended various magic figures; his tunic was of dark green; and on his square-formed chest there was a deep border of gold: his sandals were of gilt leather; his right hand held a wand of gilt metal surmounted with an owl; and around his waist he wore a girdle of gilt leather ornamented with mystic figures of extraordinary shape.

"Now, Prince of San Germano," exclaimed the sage, "deliver to me, on behalf of this my daughter, your credentials." Reginald took from his finger a massive gold ring of Saxon origin, with a bull's eye of onyx in the centre, and the lady received it most gracefully. "You are content, therefore, to be proxy for Ethelred?" pursued Aristobulus.

"Willingly," answered De Vavasour.

"Lead the bride to our repast," rejoined the astrologer.

Passing through the opening where the figure of Ethelred had appeared, Aristobulus led the way with Giacomo, and Reginald gave his hand to the intended bride.

"Do not imagine, sir knight," said she, "that I am a mad prophetess. I am contented to take you for the proxy, and only hope my intended husband may appear one tenth part as agreeable in my eyes!"

On entering an inner apartment, they found a well-covered table, and the triclinium placed on each side. Two young girls, crowned with flowers, waited on the party, and Aristobulus discoursed with Giacomo, while Reginald endeavoured to ascertain the real character of the selected bride. When the viands were removed, the fruits were placed on the table, and the bride elect retired with her damsels.

"It seems to me," said the sage, "that the appearance of my daughter has surprised you. Her mother was a Greek, and, to speak truth, though herself a believer in the powers of the sibyls, endeavoured more to make her daughter learned in the traditionary beauties of Greek composition, than in the occult sciences. Alathæa, therefore, is well acquainted with the Iliad and Odyssey of Homer: she will dwell for hours on the miseries

of Briseis and of Helen; she will lament that Mentor had the power of withdrawing Telemachus from the captivations of Calypso; and will almost feel pain when the web is unwove by the virtuous Penelope, as she calls the mother of Pan. But her classical learning has not prevented my daughter from taking a just view of omens: she has a due knowledge of the flights of birds, the feeding of fowls, and the crossing of paths by ill-omened reptiles: she also knows, what the degenerate Romans do not know, that certain objects deemed unlucky, if appearing on the sinister, or lævus, have a contrary effect. With all this, Alathæa is more fitted for the figure which she has made in the Roman processions, as the goddess of war, or the queen of heaven, than the wife of a Saxon soothsayer:—but the stars command it. It remains to state the terms. The dowry of Alathæa must be a hundred double pieces of gold:—I have not such a sum to advance."

"Be not afraid, father," said Giacomo. "The senate of Rome owes you a debt, and acknow-

ledges the services of the prince. I will be answerable that the public treasury shall pay that sum for your daughter's dowry, and a similar sum to assist in your own maintenance, until you find a damsel to supply her place."

"You are thoughtful, young man," remarked Aristobulus: "but my conditions do not end here. The marriage must be celebrated after our ancient usages."

"The Saxon never could have intended to place me in such a position as to sanction a demand upon the revenues of others," exclaimed Reginald.

"My daughter shall not go into a foreign country as a beggar," replied Aristobulus: "I give her to Ethelred, because the Fates have decreed the marriage. He is descended from the united stock of Druids, Saxons, Egyptians, and Armenians. From him will spring a line of astrologers who will spread over Europe, and forewarn monarchs of their danger."

"The money shall be paid on your delivering up Alathæa to this knight," said Giacomo.

"Stay, friend Giacomo," rejoined Aristobulus; "there are other ceremonies. This youth, as proxy, pro tempore, must consider himself the husband, and never trust the bride out of his own protection, until he consigns her to that of Ethelred." Reginald now began to consider this a serious undertaking. "The ceremony," pursued the seer, "must be performed in the presence of an individual who shall swear to see the same observed in respect to Ethelred."

Giacomo whispered: "You must not lose your friend Ethelred, or forfeit your word, for these fooleries. Name Hawkwood."

"I will produce," said Aristobulus, "what you must sign, and the ceremony shall be performed when and where you will." Giacomo named his father's house, but insisted on its being kept perfectly secret. Aristobulus retired, and soon brought forth a paper, already drawn up; it ran thus:—

"I do promise and offer my word as a knight, on the part of Ethelred the Saxon, that he shall wed and cherish in his bosom, as his true and

well-beloved wife, Alathæa of Palestrina. I also pledge my word as a knight, that I will cherish and protect the said Alathæa, on the part of the said Ethelred, keeping off from her all mischief and all evil-doers; and as a knight, I do promise to consider myself (pro bono tempore) her rightful protector, until I deliver the said Alathæa into the hands of the said Ethelred."

Reginald affixed his cypher to this document, and Aristobulus proceeded:—

"Ethelred knew the conditions when he chose you for his proxy; nay more, he knew his only chance of success was in the choice he made; for, were not certain eyes pleased, the tongue might be refractory. I was married in the same manner; and a prince, brother of a king, who was my proxy, was so charmed with the fair mother of Alathæa, that he delayed his travels from Greece so long, and subsequently so put off from day to day the ceremony of delivering the bride,—that I really think, had he not been a prince, and had pledged his word, he would have turned his course toward Naples, and carried my handsome

Greek and her daughter with him: if he had, I should never have been the rich astrologer Aristobulus. All this for ourselves only."

CHAP. XIII.

THE PROXY.

THE ceremony was consequently performed after the ancient usages of the ancestors of Aristobulus, and Hawkwood then retired. The proxy found himself in an embarrassing position: he saw that the destined wife of the Saxon was full of fire and passion: he was unwilling to mortify her vanity; but he also felt, that in offering to provide Ethelred with a wife, he had no intention, even for a time, to take his place as a husband. Reginald found his embarrassment increase as he contemplated the beautiful figure before him. Alathæa was well inclined to inspire him with a

just admiration of her charms, but she was restrained by the manner the knight had assumed. She was, however, too well accustomed to conquest, to be easily abashed; and repeated the first passage that came into her head, which could at all assist in the explanation of her feelings: the lines concluded thus:

"Non tibi crimen ero, nec quo lætere remoto
Non erit hic nobis inficiandus amor."

Reginald felt all the surprise, and a portion of the delight, which a young man so situated would feel: a secret something still restrained him, but he did not express wherefore he hesitated.

"If you knew my history," said Alathæa, "you might either scorn or pity me, but you certainly would lay aside all scruples on account of another." Reginald was most anxious to be released from those scruples: he also felt — we need not describe how he felt,—while Alathæa proceeded: "My father (if Aristobulus be my father,) has by my means amassed heaps of gold, and yet he said he could not afford to give me a dowry. The truth

is, that he gives me away in marriage, because he thinks that I appear old in the eyes of the voluptuous Romans. In the public processions, when allegorical figures have been produced, I have personated the goddesses of Liberty, Virtue, Valour, and Wisdom.

"It was for Aristobulus's advantage that, on these occasions, some of the great senators and rich citizens became enamoured of the goddess, and I was sold to the best bidder. My appearance in public was quarterly; and being seen at no other period, and always appearing in a different dress, I was not recognized as the same beauty who had captivated so many. The continued strifes of parties have for twelve months interrupted these scenes; and Aristobulus is too happy to consign me to another, especially as he is not called upon to pay down any of his gold: he knows that the passions of these elders were raised by seeing Cleopatra, as they used to call me; but now they have forgotten her existence. Giacomo is not aware that I am the person on whom he has so often rapturously gazed, when in the dress

of ceremony: nor shall he know my history. I should mention to you, for the Saxon's advantage, and my pleasure, that Aristobulus gave me a share of the produce of his Roman spoils, (opimæ maximæ, as he called them,) part of which I have expended in luxuries. I am possessed of a sumptuous wardrobe; for the state gave me fresh dresses of ceremony upon each occasion. I have also various accompaniments of comfort, which were esteemed of old; and if I am condemned to live even in a cave, I will make it as gorgeous as a palace: I have jewels of great value; and am, as I think, worthy of a better fate: but I must not murmur; nay, I will acknowledge that my repugnance to a marriage with such an uncouth giant was overcome by two powerful motives: the one was an assurance that love would make as great a change as it did in the demi-god whom he resembles; and, although he may not change the club for the distaff, yet he will change it for the wand of the astrologer: the other reason is, that the Saxon has chosen such a proxy: I know not your name, nor did I know those of the voluptuous

Romans whose wealth rewarded me for the sacrifices I made: but I am sure I never till now knew what love was. You see, sir knight, that I speak candidly: you may disdain me if you will; but you must keep your word, and guard me from others. If you do not keep that promise cheerfully, I have enough of woman in me to decide upon aiding evil-doers in their assaults, and so prove your word valueless: how then will you appear before the Saxon, or Aristobulus, with your knightly word and promise broken?"

"You argue, Cleopatra," replied Reginald, "as if I were a Stoic, or a stone: I am neither the one nor the other. I am capable of judging of the beauties of the form before me; and I understand your Latin invocation, to which I reply——"

[We will save the reader the quotation, and leave him or her to the imagination of the mode in which a youthful knight made answer to a beautiful woman.]

CHAP. XIV.

REPRESENTATION.

In the morning before sun-rise, the bride, under a disguise, was conveyed to the Temple, and Reginald galloped with Colonna to meet and receive King Robert. As they rode along, Giacomo questioned his friend as to his adventure. "Forsooth, Reginald," said he, "you have represented the Pope; you have represented the King of France; and now you must rise to the dignity of representative of the sole descendant of all the Saxons, East and West! You have gained a royal bride for King Ethelred; but I fear she will insist on your being her prime minister; and if she does, how will our little ally look on our return to Avignon?"

"Our ally intends to marry," replied De Vavasour; "and, to tell you the truth, I am well

pleased with my promise, though it was unguarded; and I shall take especial care of this beauty, and personally deliver her to Ethelred. Now there is, in the castle of Windsor, a certain haughty princess who has heard of the charms of our ally, and has almost considered fidelity to those charms as excusable; but I am not quite prepared to say she would approve of my giving safe conduct to our Roman queen. You must know, Alathæa is no other than the enchanting Cleopatra, of whom we have heard speak."

"And whom I have seen. She is much changed: time will do wonders."

"What she was twelve months ago I cannot tell; but I can swear, Giacomo, that when she threw off the veil, and displayed a form which Phidias would have worshipped, I felt that Alathæa appeared more than mortal;—a commanding Juno, as well as an inviting Venus."

"Then I may suppose, Reginald, that you felt no hesitation in unloosing that which was certainly not the Gordian knot; nor disinclined to act the

part of Mars, for the advantage of Vulcan. Be prudent, however, and do not be caught, like the celestial lovers, in a net."

"I certainly am placed in great difficulty. I have promised safe conduct to the bride: she is a woman of the most ardent passions, and has threatened to aid in the destruction of my plighted word, unless I personally watch over her safety. Now I must to the wars, and a female cannot be my companion. If successful, I return to Avignon, and there fresh difficulties await me. Perhaps Alathæa will consent to take her passage in my own ship under proper escort, and await my arrival in England; but for that I must have her acquiescence, and this old astrologer's permission; for I must not break the word of a knight, though given to the most despicable of human beings."

"Aristobulus is an avaricious rogue, but he is a good calculator. It was on his consultation with the stars, which pointed out a favorable opportunity for a daring action, that I galloped into Rome, and executed as seditious an act as ever Roman was guilty of."

"You did it in a manner worthy of a Roman, and shall be rewarded in a manner worthy of a Pope. Now, Giacomo, we will meet King Robert with a grave face, and then depart for Viterbo. I have been a long time without a sword in my hand, and feel some anxiety to try if I have forgotten its use: they say the Arena is famous for such opportunities, and I am determined to give vent to my curiosity, and explore the Coliseum. The last words Alathæa said to me were, 'beware of entering that Arena!' and for that reason I am determined to go there, and alone."

"When?"

"That is a point I have not decided upon; and if I had, Giacomo, I would not tell."

The friends arrived in Rome, and speedily prepared to attend the King of Naples in the Castle of St. Angelo.

CHAP. XV.

SAN GERMANO.

KING Robert of Naples received Reginald according to his deserts, created him Prince of San Germano, with a grant of a suitable estate, and gave him the order which decorated his own mantle.

"You have," said the King, "travelled much; and, if I mistake not, Prince Reginald, have visited the English court?"

"Yes, sire, and shall forthwith return to it, when your banners again float on the castles of Italy."

"It would, I suppose, be useless for me to solicit your aid for the recovery of Sicily?"

"I would willingly assist your Highness in any exploit; but I have a pledge to redeem, and a prize to claim; and, when wedded, the fair partner of my bed must be my monitress."

"Your wife would not counsel you justly, if she permitted you to risk your soldiers in so hopeless an enterprise, in order to please an old man."

"Would, sire, that I were King of England! Robert should then be King of Sicily; and I would form an alliance on such strict and honorable principles, that the connexion should last as long as the two kingdoms existed. England should aid in establishing your rights, and you would assist in extending her power; and the banners of the Leopards should float on the castles of the Mediterranean Islands. We would buy corn, wine, and oil from you, and you would take our produce in return; our navies would silence those of Europe, and the two monarchs might become each the founder of a new empire: Troy and Carthage might revive, and Athens again become the seat of literature."

"There, my son, you touch upon the chord to which vibrate my very heart-strings. O, for one hour of life to behold such a day! You shall be the bearer of offers to the English Edward."

"I fear he will not listen to them: Edward in-

dulges dreams of conquest elsewhere, but he may be disappointed. France, if left alone, has seeds of discontent enough to produce internal dissensions; but, attacked by foreign arms, all will unite in the glorious cause of patriotism."

"Would that Italy were tranquil, and San Germano free to accompany us to our city of Naples!"

"I promise, sire, to visit your Highness at Naples, and present my bride: she loves learning and goodness;—in the royal Robert she will find both."

As Reginald and Colonna were retiring from their audience, King Robert made a sign to the latter.

"To-morrow evening, Giacomo," said he, "we will visit the Temple of Fortune."

"Then to-morrow evening," thought Reginald, "will I visit the Flavian amphitheatre." On the road to the Colonna palace, he questioned Lorenzo as to his amusements. "How does time pass with you in this city? Have you visited all the remains of antiquity? Have you bowed the

knee before Pompey's statue, beneath which even Cæsar fell?"

"To be candid, Prince of San Germano," replied his friend, "I prefer one figure of animated flesh to all the statues art ever furnished; and I would not exchange that wicked morsel of mortality, Julia Franceschi, for the whole court of Olympus."

"Is she also a brunette?" inquired Reginald.

"Yes, but a very different one from that silly girl of Avignon, who must wed, forsooth, with a discarded soldier."

"To-morrow, Lorenzo, you must ride with Hawkwood to San Germano: I have not leisure to visit my newly-gained territory; but you can report what my vassals' wants are, and I will relieve them." Thus Reginald determined to ensure himself from being accompanied by his officers in his project to explore the vaults of the Coliseum.

CHAP. XVI.

THE COLISEUM.

REGINALD had the precaution to wear his breast-plate; and, wrapping himself in his cloak, commenced his research. The fineness of the night enabled him to traverse several passages; and he was about to enter one that led to the place where the wild beasts had formerly been secured, when a figure in a flowing mantle passed close to him, and said, "Forbear!" The figure disappeared before he could recover from his surprise.

He advanced, and received a blow from a short Roman sword on the breast; fortunately, his armour was of proof, and the weapon glanced off: he buried his own sword in the bosom of his assailant, at the moment that another weapon struck his side: he turned quickly round, and saw a figure, half-armed, standing between him and a second assassin, in the attitude of protecting our

hero, who instantly attacked his adversary: after a short space, the bravo fled, leaving his wounded companion to the mercy of the conqueror.

Reginald's first impulse was to thank his protector, whose raised visor showed the features of Alathæa: she did not allow the assassin to see her face; and, putting her finger on her mouth, disappeared.

Reginald stooped to view his fallen foe, and discovered one of the Romans who had remonstrated with him on the subject of Pope John's residence at Rome.

"Your better angel," said this man, "has saved you from destruction: retire instantly, or my companion will return with sufficient force to overpower you. For me,—I deserve my fate, and implore your pardon."

Reginald passed into the Arena, where he found Hawkwood, with several of his armed men.

"Your friend Giacomo," said the faithful Saxon, "ordered me here, and is himself employed in seeking your Highness through the intricate windings of the ruined passages."

In his progress, Colonna found the wounded Roman, and directed his people to give assistance. "I should have thought, Franceschi," said he, "you knew the dangers of these walls too well to trust yourself within them alone: I fear you have fallen by one of our party, in wicked revenge for past deeds."

The soldiers carried Franceschi into the Arena. "Colonna," cried he, "I have not many minutes to live, and want the aid of a priest more than the assistance of your soldiers."

Colonna hastened to a religious house in the neighbourhood of the Coliseum, and the soldiers formed a group round the dying Roman.

But Franceschi was not fated to pass tranquilly into the other world: his brother rushed in with a numerous and well-armed party.

Reginald formed his men for an assault. The soldiers of Colonna, imagining that the persons advancing were the assassins returning to carry off their prey, moved towards Franceschi; but Reginald placed them in another position, by which he ensured the safe return of Colonna. He

briefly related to Hawkwood what had occurred. "I do not wish to shed more blood," exclaimed he; "but that leader richly deserves punishment. Take this handkerchief as an emblem of truce, and say from me, if Udolpho Franceschi has one spark of courage in his infamous composition, let him advance into the centre of the Arena, and we will, hand to hand, decide the contest."

Franceschi commanded his people to remain with his brother, and alone advanced against the Prince. Reginald threw aside his cloak and breast-plate, and assailed his adversary, who displayed more skill and activity than he had imagined him to possess. The arrival of the priest put an end to the conflict: he threatened both parties with the vengeance of the church, if they dared to combat while he was giving the extreme unction. The priest then knelt down to receive the dying man's confession, who made a sign to his brother, and entreated him to throw himself at the feet of the Prince, and demand his pardon: he then confessed his crime, received the consolations of the priest, and died.

CHAP. XVII.

ASTROLOGICAL SECRETS.

The passions of the younger Franceschi were calmed by the composure and resignation of his brother, and he obeyed his will with an air of dignified sorrow. The Prince raised him from his kneeling posture, and addressed him with unusual gravity. "You have been guilty of an act unworthy a knight,—unbecoming a man: you have attempted the life of an individual who has carefully abstained from mixing in private feuds;—of one who has endeavoured to discharge his duty for the advantage of Italy and Rome;—of one who is ready to maintain that the jurisdiction of the Pope is that of the dove, while the Emperor's is that of the eagle. But you are a brave man in single combat; and, having given you my forgiveness, I will add, that I shall always be ready to

meet you when and where you will, to uphold my public opinions; but I will also add, that those opinions shall never disturb either the harmony of my own, or any other domestic circle. I am grateful to Heaven for the protection afforded me; and we shall hereafter meet, I hope, as friends."

The following morning, the Prince remained in his apartment until summoned to attend King Robert to Palestrine. The society of this monarch was the richest treat with which fortune could favor Reginald: his military knowledge, his political information, the internal management of his kingdom, added to his learning and elegant acquirements, rendered him superior, as a companion, to all other persons. Reginald left the mansion of Colonna unperceived, and directed his steps to the Temple, where he found a page in waiting: he did not look at the youth, but took his seat among the ruins, when the moon slowly rose, filling the heavens with its transparent light, and casting its shadows on the broken columns. The form of the page was now perfectly visible:

and Reginald thought he never had seen a handsomer youth.

"I come," said he, "from Aristobulus, to escort a king: are you the person I seek?"

"Thank you, youth, no; I am but a knight, who seeks retirement: —"

"To thank the goddess Fortune for having saved you from an assassin."

"How know you that, youth?"

"Aristobulus sent the Goddess of Victory to your aid, and she warded off a blow which would have been fatal."

"And the goddess was ——"

"Alathæa!"

"Page! goddess! Grecian nymph!—you can assume a variety of shapes, and in all appear superior."

"Hark! here come the horses."

Giacomo led the way, followed by King Robert: the page uncovered his head, and his luxuriant tresses fell upon his shoulders.

"A handsome lad, forsooth," said Robert: "I would have him in my service."

"You are too good, sire," said the youth: "but my destiny is sealed."

"Lead the way to Aristobulus," exclaimed the king.

They descended to the cave of the astrologer; and the page returned, leaving the inquirers to be gratified or displeased as the Fates or Aristobulus willed. Robert was so pleased with the good fortune foretold him, that he gave the astrologer an order for a hundred broad pieces of gold, and offered him a place at his court, where an establishment should be maintained for him. Aristobulus declared, that to serve such a king was his highest ambition; but that he must return every quarter to his present abode: this was agreed to, and the king retired.

Aristobulus was delighted with his good fortune. "I can," said he, "now afford to be honest with Alathæa: she shall have her dowry; and, as I am established, I will give her ten pieces to buy rings and gewgaws. She is a vain fool. The young Clio and her mother shall, in my absence, occupy this abode; and when I return, I will so train the

damsel that she shall shine in these Roman riots as much as the Queen of the Saxons: in the mean time, if there is a procession, I will produce Julia Franceschi."

When the King and Giacomo had mounted their horses, Reginald descended with the page, to pay his devoirs to the great Italian seer. He had arranged himself with his books, his charts, his calculations; and as little expected to see Reginald and Alathæa, as the great Ethelred, to whom he was to be allied.

"Well, my daughter," cried he, "what has happened?"

"Nothing, to-night, of notice," replied Alathæa; "but last night I saved my protector from death, and I wish him personally to thank you, for you foresaw the danger."

Reginald knew well that the best thanks was money, and he wrote an order for thirty pieces, observing;—"I am not a king, Aristobulus, but I know all men have their necessities. You have, I am sure, many ways of expending your money,

and it gives me pleasure to contribute to such expenditure."

"Daughter," said Aristobulus, "I give this to you; for you were the performer, and Ursula the suggester."

The sage spoke the latter words in a subdued tone, and inwardly said, "the royal order need not now be infringed upon."

Aristobulus requested the Prince to partake of their nightly meal, and Reginald acquiesced. The astrologer had originally the intention of offering hospitality to the King; but when he found himself enrolled among the followers of royalty, he considered it would be improper to be the host of his future sovereign. Our hero was surprised at seeing the table set out so sumptuously: the wines of France had been cooled in snow, and he became exhilarated beyond his usual portion of high spirits. The seer too was inspired by the sparkling wines, and gaily related to Reginald some of the events of his life.

In the age to which our narrative relates, astro-

logers were great favorites; and, if handsome, soon found that the word chastity was not enrolled in the Italian catalogue of virtues. While Aristobulus spoke of things which should have remained secret in his own breast, the page whispered Reginald: — "You see I did not paint the seer in worse colours than he deserved: I believe him to be the most profligate character in existence, and I loathe him."

"It covers me with shame," replied Reginald, "to hear such deeds avowed in your presence: but he is too high in wine to be opposed; and were I to appear abashed, he would, out of pure vice, use language still more improper. Tiberius was an innocent to him."

"News from the Emperor," cried Lorenzo, entering with a fair lady, who was well acquainted with the Temple of Fortune.

"Good news, or bad?" inquired Reginald.

"Swords must be drawn," was the answer.

"Mine is ready," cried the Prince, and he unsheathed it as he spoke.

" Stay, Lorenzo," said the lady; " let me ask this learned man."

The learned man had quaffed too many goblets of choice Falernian, and was too ready for " rixam seu insanos amores," to answer questions. Seeing Julia, the first impulse of Aristobulus was love; seeing Lorenzo, quarrel; — but hearing the name of the Emperor, there came, over all, fear. He imagined that Louis was again at the gates of Rome, and started up to make a rapid retreat, and to enclose himself in his sanctum sanctorum, where lay his heart in the midst of his wealth. He knew that Louis detested such trickery as he called astrology, and he feared the Emperor might have heard of the active part he had taken. Fear and wine overpowered him; and, exclaiming,—" O great Emperor, take Alathæa; she is the Cleopatra of Rome; take my hard-earned money; take every thing but my life!"—he measured his length on the ground. Alathæa and Julia hastened to bathe his temples, and endeavoured to restore him to life; while Lorenzo cried

out, "Let us drink better courage to the fallen hero!" Having finished his draught, he continued:—"Giacomo Colonna directed me to this cave of enchantment, and also told me of Aristobulus's propensities. By accident I met the Lady Julia, who came to consult her old acquaintance."

When Aristobulus recovered himself enough to guide his steps, he abruptly left the chamber, carrying with him two massive gold cups, and barred the door which led to his stronghold.

"He might have thanked me for assisting to restore him," said Julia, "and have been polite enough to reply to my inquiries. I seek from him the knowledge of the murderer of my cousin, Luigi Franceschi."

"Retire with me, Lady Julia," said Alathæa, "and I will relate all."

"You seem a pretty youth," rejoined Julia; "and I would willingly be alone with you; but what would my serviente say?"

"He would trust you, even if he were an Italian," was Alathæa's reply.

"The news, Prince," said Lorenzo, "is good,

but we must march. The hour is come for striking a decisive blow; and the King has left Palestrine." Alathæa, or Lucius, as she now called herself, entered soon after. "Prince of San Germano," exclaimed she, "Julia Franceschi has heard from me the circumstances of her cousin's death, and would kneel to you for pardon, but that I thought her much too handsome to approach so near: she is greatly distressed."

"Say, Lucius," replied Reginald, "I lament that her relative fell not in open combat,— and that all is forgotten."

CHAP. XVIII.

VITERBO.

Hawkwood was occupied in superintending the removal of Alathæa's property to Rome. She had omitted mentioning that the old and rich Romans had heaped presents on presents, in addition to the money bargained for with Aristobulus: in fact, the baggage appeared to Hawkwood immense, and he could not refrain from wondering what could have induced so handsome, so rich, and so dignified a personage as Alathæa appeared to be, to accept of such a husband as Ethelred the Saxon. In the morning Reginald hastened to take the command of his troops, attended by Lucius. The armour which had served for the Goddess of Victory had been beaten out, so as to lose the form of Grecian symmetry; and the intervallum of Nature was filled up by a thick padding, which gave the air of a full and manly chest.

The troops arrived in front of Viterbo, and Lucius hastened to deliver a letter from Aristobulus to an aged man, who was one of the numerous agents of his will. The old man said, "I will obey: come, my son, to-morrow evening after sunset to the southern gate." When Reginald heard this arrangement, he determined to guard the young Roman against the treachery of his guide, if treachery were intended; and therefore ordered twenty men, fully armed, to march with them, and set forward with Hawkwood. The old man met Lucius at the gate.

"I am happy that you come alone," observed he; "otherwise there might have been suspicion. Take this cloak and hood, and enter the town: you will find within a person who will conduct you; and before the morning, you may contrive to have the gates open for the Pope's troops."

Reginald ordered Hawkwood to inform the Legate of his adventure, and then entered the town. The men wore Roman helmets, and white cloaks: they passed along as guards of the city. The person described by the old man was at the

appointed place; but Reginald, accustomed to warfare, thought it advisable to seize the guide, who proved to be a woman. "Will you lead us to the residence of the governor?" said he: this was readily assented to, and they arrived at a high wall.

"Within," said the guide, "is the court of the palace, but you cannot attack it: the place is too strong for so small a force." Reginald stationed half his party at the entrance, and sent the remainder to occupy the south gate. Lorenzo and Hawkwood arrived with a reinforcement, and information that the Cardinal would soon commence his march.

An old soldier, who had formerly served in the Emperor's guard, happened to pass, and saw the dispositions round the palace: the German went directly to the barracks, and demanded to see the commanding officer. He stated what he had witnessed, and what he apprehended; but the Italian was so alarmed at the unexpected danger of the Governor, that he could give no orders.

"Go to your own captain," said he, "and take

his orders." This officer was lying on his bed, wrapt in a cloak. The moment he understood the report, he sprung up, exclaiming, " Relieve the sentries here with the recruits, and hasten to secure the south gate. Order the troops under arms; and I will lead them to the attack of these intruders, who come to disturb gentlemen from their sleep." The captain divided his men into two parties, and advanced cautiously to the governor's quarters.

The Cardinal Legate had given orders to advance, but they were not obeyed. Giacomo Colonna, anxious for the safety of his friend, galloped forward at the head of some knights: on entering the town, they could distinctly hear the clashing of swords, and the sounds of spear and shield: they rushed on, and beheld Reginald fighting in retreat, and supporting his wounded page: the knight covered his retreat, and Reginald carried Lucius to a small chamber in the gate-tower. This position the knights maintained until the trumpets of the Cardinal announced the approach of the army; and, as the knights had

the power of lifting the porteullis, the troops defending the town were ordered to form; a parley was sounded, and Viterbo surrendered to the Pope.

CHAP. XIX.

THE FLESH WOUND.

When Lucius fell at the feet of Reginald, Le Jeune Lion sprang upon the assailant, and with one blow of his battle-axe felled him to the ground. This was no other than the German captain: Reginald then seized the wounded page in his arms, and, by Colonna's timely aid, placed him in safety. Tearing off the armour, Reginald was delighted to find it was but a flesh wound: he cut off one of the sleeves of the fine linen undervest which Lucius wore, and tearing it into stripes, arranged it so as to form a bandage. We have already said that the form of Alathæa was

full, but her waist was small. There are some square-built females for whom a manufactory could scarce supply a bandage; but Alathæa was not of that order. While Reginald was occupied in stanching the blood, Colonna entered. "I hope," exclaimed he, "our Roman beauty is not dangerously wounded?"

"No, Colonna," replied she, "I think I have endured more from fright, than from the sword of the Captain. Poor man! he has suffered for his exertions: he rallied his men well, and led them bravely: the wound was intended for the Prince; but I sprang forward, hoping to catch the weapon in my cloak: the point, however, passed through, and entered between my breast-plate and girdle. It was the force of the blow that threw me on the ground."

Reginald desired Giacomo to assist in rolling the bandage; and the latter saw sufficient to be assured that the form of Alathæa was as perfect as when she last appeared as the Tragic Muse. "Here, Lucius," said Giacomo, "is a present

from the Cardinal Legate; and if his Eminence were himself to fasten it on, perhaps other and richer gifts might follow."

This reminded Lucius that the male character was but assumed.

"I think, Prince," said she, "you had better yourself affix this ornament around my neck, and allow our friend to seek another apartment."

As Colonna was about to retire, the wounded captain was brought in. Reginald threw a cloak over the shoulders of Lucius, and demanded, in a tone of severity, why the officer had dared to intrude upon his privacy. "Sir Reginald," answered he, "I could not die in peace without assuring you that Hermann de Fredericksburg knew not the enemy to whom he was opposed, and never would have willingly lifted his arm against so brave a leader as ——". The strength of Hermann was exhausted, and his lifeless body was removed from the chamber.

"Take me, Sir Reginald," said Lucius, "to some more cheerful place, for I shall die of gloom if I remain in this barred prison." A handsome

apartment had been prepared for the use of the Prince in the palace of the governor; and thither Reginald conducted his page.

While Lucius slept, Reginald questioned Lorenzo:—"How did you tear yourself from the black-eyed Julia?"

"Our bargain was only pro tempore. When the trumpets sounded the advance, I said, 'Adieu!' presented a necklace, saluted the fair, leaped on my horse, and gave the word *march*. My charmer says she will abandon all party politics, and join the Pope for the sake of San Germano."

"For the head of his staff, you mean."

"No, by Jove, she made me jealous: ever since the evening at Palestrine she has envied Lucius, and wished to see herself in male attire, and try to captivate your Excellency by the display of well-turned limbs: but I told the fickle creature it would not do; so she has resigned herself to her fate, or another lover."

CHAP. XX.

THE TRIUMPHAL ENTRY.

THE remaining towns of the papal patrimony soon acknowledged the power of John, and Reginald arrived at Leghorn. The Pisans were tired of the exactions of the Emperor, and had sent ambassadors to Avignon. The troops of Louis murmured for want of pay; and the cavalry, into which the German guard of the Primate had been incorporated, joined the standard of Reginald. An embassy was sent to the Prince of San Germano; but the answer was, a demand that Nicholas should be delivered up to them without conditions: the anti-pope, however, escaped by the aid of the Count Boniface.

The Emperor, in his reverse of fortune, showed great firmness, but was obliged to retire into the further part of Lombardy. Having received permission to pass the Genoese territory. Reginald,

accompanied by Colonna, Lorenzo, and Hawkwood, and escorted by his German guard, marched from Leghorn. Before his soldiers embarked, the Prince thus addressed them:—

"I will not simply thank, but reward you, my brave fellow-soldiers! My seneschal shall give to each man a purse of money: such as have received wounds shall be retained to guard my castle, and be the foundation of fresh armies. It is not a soldier's duty to play the orator:—suffice it to say, I wish I were more rich in words and money, more fully to express my thanks and reward your merits. May you have good health and prosperous winds!"

Reginald, by forced marches, reached Aix, from whence Lorenzo was ordered to set forward, and announce his arrival. The Pope determined to give his defender a triumphal entry. A temporary arch was erected, covered with boughs of laurel and myrtle, entwined with wreaths of roses. It was fine spring weather, which, in the south of France, is short, but delicious. On either side of the arch galleries were erected, covered with rich

awnings hung with silks, carpets, and tapestries. Here were arranged the cardinals and nobles, as well as the ladies of Avignon. A special deputation, among whom was Petrarch, went out to meet the Prince, and to place on his head an enamelled wreath of laurel leaves on gold stalks. Reginald, with Colonna on his right hand, and Lorenzo on his left, followed by Hawkwood and Lucius, marched on to the palace. The ladies waved their handkerchiefs, and the populace cheered: flowers were showered on their heads as they passed along, and the procession was closed by the veteran Germans. The Pope received Reginald with open arms, and expressed to Colonna how unable he was to reward his defender in proportion to his merits. Colonna and Petrarch retired.

"What favor have you to ask?" said his Holiness: "for my next words shall be assent."

"May I solicit your Holiness," returned Reginald, "to bestow a mitre on Giacomo, your zealous servant?"

" My son, he is not of an age suitable to such a dignity."

" Where would the Holy Father find an aged man who could, or would if he could, affix in a public place a bull of excommunication against a sovereign at the head of an army, and almost in his very presence? Besides, Colonna has great talents, and is a faithful supporter of the rights of the church."

" Lombes is vacant: Giacomo shall be named to it."

Reginald now related the progress of the war, and mentioned the assistance he had received from Aristobulus.

" I have heard that name before," said the Pope: " now I remember, it was he who gave the pearl to the Queen of Naples, and prophesied that it should hereafter forward the fortunes of a youth protected by, and protector of, the papal power. For yourself, Reginald, I will establish an order, of which I will make you the Grand Master; and this evening you shall receive the appointment for your friend Colonna."

Reginald retired to Villeneuve, where Colonna and Petrarch awaited his appearance. "Hawkwood," cried he, "produce our choicest Burgundy. We must not lose one moment in drinking to the health of the brave, the loyal, the accomplished Bishop of Lombes."

"What other name has your friend?" inquired the newly-made prelate.

"Giacomo Colonna."

Reginald and Petrarch then embraced the bishop, while Lucius kissed his hand. "By your leave, brave youth," said he to the latter, "you must embrace me as a friend; for you saved his life who has now rendered mine happy."

"I have not had time, Petrarch," said our hero, "to inquire after your beautiful Donna: is she as handsome and as cruel as ever?"

"She appears as changeable as the wind; one day all smiles, another all disdain: but I dedicate my nights only to the thoughts of her; for I have had, besides my occupation as private secretary to the Pope, sufficient employment during the day in writing against that tyrant Louis."

" Was Madame de Sade among the beauties of the balcony?" asked Reginald.

" Yes, but eclipsed in your eyes by the beauty who sate on her left."

Lucius felt as if suffocated; and swallowing some water, hastily retired.

" What ails that youth?" said Petrarch.

" Nothing," answered De Vavasour, " but spasms. He is of a hasty disposition, and violent feelings; easily agitated, easily subdued; at one moment a lion, at another a lamb. Something came across his mind."

" Yes," returned the poet, " I saw his eyes flash fire, and then dissolve in tears."

" He is subject to such rapid transitions," pursued Reginald.

Colonna, in order to change the subject, reverted to the kindness he had received from his friend. " You must come, Petrarch," said he, " with Prince Reginald, to my brother, the Cardinal: I should be sorry he were not among the first to know my good fortune."

" To tell you the truth, Colonna," observed De

Vavasour, "my going may give an idea that I am anxious to see the beauty Petrarch alluded to; and as that is not my wish, I shall pass the evening at home."

Colonna and the rest retired, and Lucius entered.—"I know, Prince, that I have behaved improperly; I know I have no claim to your regard, nor any right to feel unhappy because you are admired or loved by others; but the jealousy of my Italian nature is not sufficiently subdued by my Grecian pride. I wish while with you to be considered as worthy of regard; but I know how short that time must be, and how reluctantly any proofs of my affection are received."

"It is not, Lucius, from any want of inclination to fulfil my duty towards you; but here I am known, and there are searching eyes in Avignon With all your care, disguise, and contrivance, you are a very woman. You may think that my rank and exploits might preserve me from sarcasm; but my opinion is, the higher the station, the greater the necessity for observing decorum. You foolishly felt offended, because there was one more particularly

the object of my attention than the rest in the kind group which received me. I cannot relate the circumstances connected with happy recollections; but to show my willingness to give you pleasure, I have remained at home instead of visiting her, whom you considered as an object of such attraction."

"I entreat of you, Prince, to go instantly: I came with you to obey orders, not to impede pleasures. Your kindness and condescension have amply repaid me; and, when I am the wife of —— no matter! hasten to the beauty I saw most anxious to catch your look, to gaze upon your features, to press you to her heart."

"Lucius, I am determined to remain at home: bring your lute, and sing to me."

When Alathæa had concluded her song, Reginald said, "You have rewarded me for my resolve. I should not have heard such sweet sounds from the mouth of ——"

"Come, Prince, your mouth must not tell tales: I could sing you another song, but it would tire you."

" No, 'tis my passion, Lucius."

A gentle tap at the door announced a visitor, and Don Alphonso de Grenada entered. The young Don stared at Lucius, and Lucius looked surprised at the Don.

" My friend Alphonso!" cried Reginald, " I did not expect this honor."

" My guardian sent me to take your commands on an important topic. He is confined with the gout; but he has a despatch to communicate to you from France, and not a moment must be lost. Come along."

" Lucius," said De Vavasour, " if you are fatigued, you can retire to rest. I must attend the person who conducts our diplomatic affairs during my absence."

The page regarded the youth with a look of suspicion; but, conquering the jealous feelings which rushed into her mind, Alathæa threw herself on a couch, there to await the knight's return.

CHAP. XXI.

THE PAGE.

CECILE entered, with Reginald, the garden-gate through which the knight had once moved with such rapturous feelings:—where were those raptures now? Gone, like the breath of the wind that had fanned the roses as he passed.

"I think," began the disguised fair, "a true knight ought to know that gratitude should exist after passion is dead. Why was I forced to seek you, Sir Reginald?"

"Untoward circumstances, some foolishly unguarded expressions, some ——"

"Well, sir, proceed."

"I cannot explain the cause, Cecile."

"Madame de Turenne, if it is your pleasure, Prince of San Germano! and as you have not a fitting excuse, there lies your road to my father's apartment.—Adieu!"

The Count de Cominges could not rise from his seat; but his tongue was not tied, if his feet were. "Welcome," exclaimed he, "thou greater than Cæsar or Hannibal! welcome, conqueror of Italy! welcome, restorer of pontifical power! thrice welcome to the illustrious city of Avignon."

"There is news from France, I hear."

"Yes, illustrious Prince! The King commands your presence, and this private letter will tell you further." It was from Robert d'Artois, and stated that Philippe had demanded homage from Edward, and that Isabel had replied, "Le fils d'un Roi n'iroit pas s'humilier devant le fils d'un Comte."

"The enraged monarch has seized the revenues of Guienne, &c.; but, before proceeding to extremities, Philippe has determined to send another embassy, and has selected you, perhaps in the hope of embroiling you with Edward; but you cannot refuse the appointment."

So far from refusing, Reginald was delighted at the opportunity of forwarding his suit with Matilde, and also because it would free him from the awkward situation in which he was placed. The

knight had other reasons, which passed rapidly across his mind, but found no utterance. In his farewell visit to his Holiness, Reginald promised to return for the installation of the knights of the order of which he was to be Grand Master.

From the palace Reginald proceeded to the residence of the Colonnas. "In bidding you adieu, my dear Giacomo," said he, "let me impress on your mind the necessity of placing the person of Nicholas at the disposal of the Pope: Louis is still powerful, and the Italians fickle: for yourself, may you be happy with your dignity!" Petrarch accompanied Reginald to the Maison de Cominges, where the former had frequently met with Laura, for whom his passion was as strong and as fruitless as ever. In Madame de Turenne's apartment the visitors found Eleonore, whom Petrarch of late had seldom seen: the improvement in her appearance was too great not to be observed; and, between a species of admiration for one, whom his friends told him was dying for love of him, bashfulness, and shame, Petrarch could not speak. Cecile broke the painful silence. "That

is a very handsome Roman youth who accompanied Prince Reginald; have you seen him, Eleonore?" She briefly replied in the negative. "I was so curious to hear his story, that I sent for him, and had a private interview: when I addressed him in French, he professed to speak no other language than Latin: I spoke in Latin, and the young rogue changed his note, and answered me in very good Italian."

"He does not speak French," said Reginald.

"I do not know what he can or cannot do," answered Cecile: "I assure you he is a very clever young fellow; and if he was not so shy of approaching, a lady might make of him a very good cavaliere serviente."

"Lucius is destined for another purpose," remarked our hero.

"I do not know what his destiny may be," returned the tenacious Cecile; "but I think, were he not to use that ugly brown colour, his eyes would not look so fierce; and if his figure were not so feminine, he might make a very handsome

lad:—in short, Sir Reginald, if Lucius were not a handsome woman, he might make a pretty man."

"You are a shrewd diviner, Madame de Turenne; but I wish it to be kept secret."

"I do not speak from jealousy," said Cecile, in a low tone: "I shall soon be, at least I hope soon to be, a married woman, and no longer the sport of fortune. You may be one day a prince, and the next sans terre; but, rich or poor, Reginald, you shall always find in my heart the place of true friendship,—it may be love,—or *might* be, if my mind were less strong:—but, my friend, for a journey to England, Lucius is not a proper companion."

"I consider Petrarch and Eleonore as our brother and sister; and therefore, Cecile, I will relate to you my adventure with Lucius."

The listeners were highly pleased with the extraordinary tale which Reginald related, and much amused at his being made, willing or unwilling, the temporary husband of a young sorceress. Petrarch wished that Lucius should

be presented to the Pope. "Her father," said he, "has been of great service, and John likes any thing extraordinary:—I am certain his Holiness would reward her." Franciscus departed, for the avowed purpose of presenting Lucius; but, in reality, to avoid an embarrassing conversation with Eleonore.

"I do not know what the Countess of Hainault will say," observed Cecile, "to your wedding a witch; but if I were in her place, I could find it in my heart to forgive you, from the recollection of the dilemma in which you were placed. What will the age come to, when a handsome young Roman female is obliged to quote classic authority as precedent for a young knight's submitting to the force of the little god of Love? the one Alathæa invoked was the son of Nox."

"To be serious, Cecile, I hope to deliver my charge into Ethelred's hands before I see the young Countess: the Saxon has, however, promised to secure my peace upon that subject."

"Astrologers may have great power; but I defy the whole body to satisfy a fair maiden of the

propriety of her future husband's being the caro amico of a handsome Italian." Petrarch now entered with Lucius, who was dressed as a young Roman knight in his evening habit.

" By our good hopes," pursued the lively Cecile, " the youth is fair to view. Come hither Lucius! These raven locks, and this ivory skin, will win all hearts but that of Laura:—hers is of stone, is it not, Petrarch?" By Petrarch's advice the brown colour had been washed off, and Pope John might guess, if he chose, to what sex his visitor belonged.

Having heard the story of Aristobulus's services, and the wound of Lucius, John had requested Petrarch to return with the youth in the evening, when he should be alone; and wished to hear further as to the power Aristobulus had acquired over the mind of Robert of Naples. " Perhaps, Lucius," resumed Cecile, " were his Holiness younger, your natural garb would serve your purpose better, and open the treasury which John so loves: but no matter what the garb,—you must be admired."

"Lady, you flatter a poor page," answered Lucius.

"As for your poverty, I know nothing of it," continued La Comtesse de Turenne; "and as for your qualities to be a page, I must not inquire into them; your master best understands such matters: part of your duty, as a page, is to carry love-letters: now carry one which I will dictate to Madame Laura; and if you obtain a salute from her chaste lips, I will reward you richly."

While this conversation took place, Eleonore had broken through the ice, and forced Petrarch into a discussion, in which Reginald joined. The subject was, the changeableness of human nature. Petrarch maintained that philosophers, and men of sense, never changed; but that women were sometimes fickle. This proposition Eleonore opposed. Reginald endeavoured to soften down some expressions which he considered too bitter for a lady to utter, and which he was surprised to hear from the lips of the timid Eleonore. Cecile interrupted the argument by observing, "Men and women are both liable to change; sometimes

from conviction, sometimes from pride, and oftentimes from mere love of variety: but we will change the subject." Then, addressing Lucius in Italian, she added, "I am sure you know that a part of a page's duty is to recite; it is an accomplishment peculiar to Italians: and now, Lucius, you may indulge your own feelings, and gratify your friends, by displaying your talent." Lucius, who was a studied performer, but not an improvisatore, answered, "Fair lady, your commands shall be obeyed; but I must entreat your favor, and beg of you to plead in my behalf for equal favor here,"—(pointing to Eleonore and Petrarch.) Then, turning towards Reginald, the seeming youth recited a passage from Paulus Silentiarius, of which we give a translation:—

"To thee the reliques of a thousand flowers,
Torn from the chaplet twined in gayer hours;
To thee the goblet carved with skill divine,
Erewhile that flow'd with soul-subduing wine;
The locks now scatter'd on the dusty ground,
Once dropping odours, and with garlands crown'd:
Outcast of pleasure, and of hope bereft,
Lais! to thee thy Corydon has left."

The reciter became agitated, and Cecile evidently saw that there was more within than met the eye. After a pause, Lucius again commenced :—

> " La vostra nominanza è color d' erba
> Che viene e va : e quei la discolora
> Per cui vien fuori della terra acerba."

" If, Lucius," said Petrarch, " you wish to prophesy ill to us, who strive by our deeds to live in memory for ever,—why not say, without quoting Dante,—

> ' O ciechi, il tanto affaticar che giova?
> Tutti tornate alle gran madre antica,
> E il vostra nome appena si ritrova.' "

Lucius turned towards the speaker : there was the eye of the poet, with the calmness of the man.

" Thou art he," exclaimed the seeming page, " destined to establish the literature of Italy : Dante has begun, and Petrarch shall finish. Nay, start not, fair sir, and be not angry at a poor youth's knowledge : young as I am, I have lived with learned men."

" And unlearned too, if I mistake not," said

Cecile; "what think you, Reginald? Think you this youth found the locks of Corydon in the cave of sorcery?"

"The cave of Aristobulus is the cave of luxury; —but Lucius speaks!"

"I see, Petrarch, the laurelled crown placed on your head in the Capitol; I see senators and knights, matrons and virgins, all enraptured with your triumph. But be not vain: labour hard, and reap the fruits thereof."

At a late hour the party separated, each to his own avocations; and on the following day Reginald left Avignon.

CHAP. XXII.

THE HALL OF WESTMINSTER.

In passing through Paris, Reginald had a long interview with Robert d'Artois, and a short audience of the King. Philippe confirmed to him the right of bearing the title of San Germano, in addition to his other distinctions. The Bishop of Arras behaved towards him with a warmth of regard which Reginald could scarcely account for. This prelate was then keeper of the seals, and a person of consequence: he knew that the Archbishop of Sens was dying, and that Reginald was the first favorite at the court of Avignon, and, in short, was a person worthy of being served. In the character of Philippe there was something most obnoxious to our hero, and every day his attachment to the crown of France was diminished. At his audience, Philippe said, "We have been insulted personally by Queen Isabel; but our anger is not against women: go, then, Prince Reginald,

as our representative, armed as a knight of France; and, if Edward of England refuse to do homage, tell him from us that his estates in our kingdom are forfeited, and here is the pledge of our determination." This was a white glove, with a pale blue silk border, on which were embroidered the arms of France and Guienne, &c. The Prince was accompanied into England by a numerous suite, and was received in the great hall of Westminster: Edward was seated on a throne erected at the upper end; and the ambassador was introduced with more than usual solemnity. As Reginald marched up the centre of this magnificent assembly, Matilde whispered to the Queen, "Ethelred's prophecy is true; you see he visits us fully armed."

"Hush, my love! he speaks!"

"To thee, Edward, the third of that name, King of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Aquitaine, I come, on the part of Philippe, sixth of that name, King of France, &c. &c., and do claim homage for the territories held by female descent within his realm."

"You come, Prince Ambassador, in warlike guise: dost think the King of England fears the King of France?"

"No, King of England! but Philippe so ordained it: and if the refusal already sent be followed up by insolent reproof, or violent response, I have the royal commission ——"

"Speak it!"

"To declare thy lands in France forfeited to the crown, and to present thee this."

"And darest thou, Prince,—thou, our own lawful subject,—to offer this insult in our own court, where a nod condemns the insolent to death?"

"Sire, I offer no insolence, and know that I am in a Christian land, in presence of a Christian prince, myself a Christian knight. Your Highness may overpower a few loyal men, but you can never terrify them."

"Prince, we feel ourselves in error; we willingly acquit you of all intention to affront us, and we will consult with our nobles as to the answer

fitting to be returned: in two days you may again present yourself."

Reginald, partly angry and partly soothed, retired to his own apartment: thinking it possible a message might arrive from the King, he requested Hawkwood to take the night-watch, and to remain in an apartment near the anti-chamber.

CHAP. XXIII.

THE SAXON MARRIAGE.

In order to be in readiness at a moment's notice, Reginald wrapped himself in his robe-de-chambre, and reclined on his couch; Lucius lay in the outer chamber; and every thing appeared tranquilly arranged for the night. At the hour when they say evil spirits flit through the air, Reginald awoke, and saw an object dark and large: there was both mist and smoke, which cleared away, and the Saxon stood before him.

"Well, Knight and Prince! thou hast been in Italy: hast thou kept thy word?—hast thou brought me a wife?"

"Yes, Ethelred."

"And thou hast safely guarded her from other men?"

"Ask herself:—there she is."

"There? that is a boy, and not a woman."

"It is a woman, Ethelred, and one that, as my page, has saved my life: I hope she may live long to make yours happy."

"I know not how it is, Prince, but for some months I have been an altered man."

Reginald remarked his dress: it was as portrayed by Aristobulus. "I am in expectation," said our hero, "of a summons to Windsor, and therefore, like a soldier, rest on my arms. Lucius has been my constant companion, and a more faithful attendant never lived."

"Hast thou wherewithal to regale upon, for my travel has given an appetite?"

Reginald opened the door of an adjoining chamber, where every thing necessary was prepared.

His rising awoke Lucius, who saw, for the first time, her destined lord.

"Thou art Ethelred, the Saxon," exclaimed she.

"And thou Alathæa, the Grecian, sent by Aristobulus."

It occurred to Reginald that it would be desirable his ward should depart with her husband; and he, accordingly, quitted the chamber to consult with his faithful follower Hawkwood, while Ethelred and Lucius were left to talk of their future arrangements, or any other subject more interesting.

The Prince was lodged in the palace of the Queen; and the apartment in which the refreshments were prepared communicated with a suite now unoccupied: a private door opened, and a masked figure entered. Ethelred was too much occupied in doing honor to the provisions to notice the intruder, who wished to retreat, but could not discover the entrance. "I will assist you," said Lucius; "I perceive you have mistaken the chamber." As the intruder retired, Reginald entered with Hawkwood.

"Now, Ethelred," cried he, "my promise is fulfilled; and here, at my hands, take unto your bosom the wife of your destiny."

"Sir Reginald," exclaimed Alathæa, "it is death to leave you! I cannot yet be the wife of Ethelred: give me time for preparation, and I will then devote myself for your happiness and prosperity."

"My happiness," answered the knight, "depends upon our separation. No one has seen you; none, therefore, can betray us: you have served me faithfully, and I have protected you;—but here our contract ends: with your kind husband you must be happy."

"Do not force me to be the wife of Ethelred, until I give my free consent:—let the ceremony be delayed."

"That cannot be; we must proceed forthwith."

Alathæa sank into her seat, and submitted to the arrangements of dress made by Hawkwood. She was clothed from head to foot in a white garment. Reginald pronounced the words dictated

by Aristobulus; Ethelred repeated those allotted to him.

The magic ring was delivered; the parchment signed; and Alathæa departed with Ethelred, her heart almost broken, and her eyes full of tears.

CHAP. XXIV.

A TELL-TALE.

When the morning broke, a messenger from the court found Hawkwood in attendance, and the Prince ready to obey the orders of King Edward. The billet delivered was as follows:—

"Reginald,
"Come to our castle of Windsor as a friend.
"Edward R."

Reginald mounted his horse, ordered Hawk-

wood to follow with the baggage, and galloped to Windsor. The circumstances of the audience in the Hall of Westminster recurred to his mind; but Reginald felt conscious that he had discharged his duty towards his sovereign, while he hoped that in so doing he might finally serve his friend. These thoughts, and the idea that he had safely delivered his Roman beauty to her destined lord, solaced the knight, as he rapidly made his way to the destined point. On meeting, King Edward said,—"If you consider, Reginald, that my reception was unkind, you must thank the warlike habit you assumed: in the eyes of my subjects, I have done what a King ought to do; in the eyes of my family, I am prepared to act as a friend should do. Come to our breakfast-table."

"Sire, I have passed the night habited as I now am, in the expectation of a friendly message; and I have hastened here, on receiving it, spur in side: indeed, sire, I am not fit to appear."

"Well, Reginald, as you please: but I think there is one in our household who would dispense with ceremony; and I am sure the Queen would

pardon a want of etiquette occasioned by the anxiety of friendship."

Reginald's weakness was vanity as to appearance, and a too great fastidiousness about his person. He thought first impressions every thing, and argued with himself, that he was a weather-beaten soldier, and required certain luxuries to conquer the sun-burnt appearance of a campaign in Italy. Be it remembered, however, that what he called a campaign, most persons would call a triumph; and that occurrence being in winter, he could not be much annoyed by the sun.

When our hero appeared, it was evident that his time had not been thrown away; and his reception by Philippe and Isabel was kind and affectionate. Matilde was more cold and stately than usual, and scarcely deigned to utter one word of recognition. Reginald was grieved to find that the only one he sought would not feel towards him as others of her sex had done; and with great difficulty he retained sufficient composure to take part in the conversation which occupied the time until the mid-day repast was announced. The

circulation of the wine gave our knight some confidence, and he was inclined to amuse the King with certain incidents relative to his Italian voyage, when Isabel said,—"I hear, Reginald, that you have chosen a very handsome page, as well as a dignified astrologer, for your companions. You must know that I have been wicked enough to say that page is a woman." Matilde coloured deeply. To cover the confusion of her cousin, Philippa remarked: "Perhaps, Sir Knight, some persons of your suite took advantage of your retirement to rest last night, and indulged their festivities in your proper apartment. To speak the truth, an attendant of Queen Isabel entered your eating-chamber by mistake, and saw there two very extraordinary persons; one of whom, from the voice, she considers to have been a female."

"What your Highness says is very possible," replied the knight.

"Yes, Reginald," continued Isabel, "Maude declares it was a woman disguised, who evidently had been disturbed from sleep, and whose dress was not quite arranged:—therefore she saw more

of the figure than was intended to meet the eye."

"Very possibly, madame!" again responded our hero.

"It is not fair, Queen Mother," said the King, "thus to catechize a warrior, a traveller, and moreover an ambassador. He cannot be responsible for the whole of his suite; and there may be confessors, whom you mistake for astrologers, who have their apprentices in the science of Italian religion;—a science which has caused much ill blood in our country, and which made some of our monarchs dastards."

Isabel perceived that her son was not in a humour to be trifled with, and changed the conversation to Robert d'Artois.

CHAP. XXV.

THE SAXON'S CAVE.

When Ethelred had arranged his subterraneous apartments, so as to warrant an invitation to royalty, he sent Umptikin with a scroll, ornamented with magic characters, on which were painted certain hieroglyphics. The purpose of the dwarf's visit was comprehended by the King, and he signified his assent. On the following day, when the sun displayed its bright cheerfulness, Edward and Philippa, accompanied by Queen Isabel, the Countess Matilde, and Reginald, rode through the park to that part of the forest where Ethelred resided. The dwarf was in waiting, and, motioning to them to dismount, led the way. Reginald was the only one of the party who knew the secrets of the cavern: but even he was surprised, when Umptikin avoided the path to the green-

sward trap. By a circuitous descent the royal visitors approached the steep sides of the rock, along which a temporary staircase of oak had been erected, and near which were six of the royal foresters, in full costume. At a little distance, in various directions, were posted others of the rangers, foresters, and bowmen of the wood, to prevent the approach of any unauthorised guest, as well as to ensure the royal safety.

King Edward passed along the platform, and led Philippa to a stone gallery cut in the rock; from thence into a square recess, which formed a sort of anti-chamber; thence, between two gigantic columns of stone, into a spacious hall, where stood Ethelred and Alathæa, with six youths on his right, and six damsels on her left, dressed like the classic inhabitants of woods and groves. Ethelred wore round his brow a golden fillet with rich pendants: his robe of green was bound round his waist with a magic girdle; and in his hand he held an astrologer's wand. As the King advanced, Ethelred bowed his head respectfully:—"This is my bride, King of England, and now your sub-

ject." Alathæa bent her knee, and kissed the hand of royalty. Ethelred made a sign to Umptikin, and a curtain was withdrawn. The youths and damsels, hand in hand, advanced in procession before the royal party, followed by Ethelred and his bride. Hawkwood, armed at all points, was stationed at the entrance, and soft sounds of music were heard from unseen musicians.

The royal party were highly pleased at the novelty of the scene, and astonished at the magnificence which Alathæa's property had created. The King declared that he had never enjoyed a banquet before, and proposed a pledge to the health of the bride. Matilde watched Reginald's movements, and perceived that he filled the goblet to the very brim, and that the bride seemed highly delighted with the compliment. Isabel was determined to increase the happiness of the young Countess, and whispered, loud enough for Matilde to hear the remark, "How like the bride is to your Roman page!" Reginald coolly answered, "Yes, very like."

Ethelred requested Alathæa to thank their

royal visitors, in his name as well as her own, for the honor conferred on them; and she accordingly delivered a brief oration in Latin, at the conclusion of which the Saxon requested a private audience of the King. "You are in doubt, Lord Edward," said he, "as to visiting a foreign kingdom! Go, and be assured that you will one day tread the soil as a conqueror,—but the hour is not yet come."

When Edward had rejoined the party, Ethelred begged a moment's conversation with Matilde. —"If I mistake not, Princess, my prophecy has come to pass;—your knight has returned."

"But not alone, Saxon!"

"No, Countess! not alone. He promised to give a bride to the Saxon, and he has nobly performed his word: and you too were interested in it; for it was destined that through the aid of my intended wife, your knight should succeed in his enterprise, and that by her his life should be saved. The blow destined for the heart of Prince Reginald struck the side of Alathæa, who displayed all the courage of a man. For the Prince's care

of my bride, it is my duty to reward him, and I will promise him your hand."

"Not in my presence, I trust, Etheired: even if fate has so destined me, do not, I beseech you, affront my maiden bashfulness! — your explanation has removed great uneasiness."

On her return, Matilde appeared a different being; and, in token of gratitude, she gave a rich ring to the bride, who kissed the hand of the giver. Matilde then offered her hand to Reginald, and he impressed on the same spot a warm salutation. The young Countess attributed the compliment entirely to herself, while the wife of the Saxon as eagerly appropriated a share. When the royal party had passed, the foresters advanced, and in a few minutes, the temporary gallery was removed; some branches of trees, which on either side had been forced back, were permitted to resume their naturally-wild appearance, and no vestige of an entrance appeared. "This is like magic," said Edward; "we shall fancy ourselves in the renowned days of king Arthur, and Ethelred our Merlin."

"Your Highness," replied Reginald, "may do worse than consider him in such a light. The Saxon is too simple in his nature to adopt wicked means, and the world is too fond of the extraordinary not to admire his art. He certainly can read and understand the stars, and he foretold all that has happened to me; but I do not wish him to say more to the Countess Matilde: possibly she may consider that in the Saxon's mind there exists that which rules most men — self-interest; and with that imagination, she may also suppose—— No matter! let her not listen to him, and I shall be content."

CHAP. XXVI.

PATERNAL COMMANDS.

THE peers of England entreated Edward to obey the mandate of the French king, and tender homage, in justice due for power held under vassalage:—Edward was not prepared for ultra measures; and he therefore wrote to Philippe, excusing his delay, and promising speedy obedience. A messenger was despatched to the King of France's court, and he was also the bearer of a letter to Robert d'Artois, announcing the intention of Reginald to accompany King Edward. This delay was another cause of displeasure to Philippe, but for such matters Reginald felt little consideration: his object was Matilde, and a residence at Windsor gave him great opportunities of intercourse. Her beauty, her grace, her dignified air, far surpassed his expectations, for the promise of superior charms had been more

than fulfilled. Matilde, on her part, manifested an inclination to listen to the suit of our hero. "It is true," said she to herself, "most true, that he has conquered my sex as well as his own; but perhaps he never valued such conquests, and may have yet to learn what it is truly to love."

While Matilde was thus occupied in thought, the sudden entrance of a man made her start up from her seat: it was Rodolphe de Montleans.

"Matilde, my dearest daughter, I have not time for many words. I came here on a double errand; the one is to order the immediate attendance of Sir Reginald at Paris, and the second is to unite you to my brave friend."

He had nevertheless a third purpose, but which he did not announce to Matilde. "Why so silent, Matilde? Has Reginald done aught to lessen him in your esteem?"

"He has esteemed others too highly to leave him time to think of your daughter."

"What, child! do you mind that little affair at Avignon? — child's play, mere child's play! — You surely would not wish to teach your hus-

hand the art of love! fitter that he should teach it you. I have pledged my word: circumstances have prevented me from before fulfilling it; but now I must redeem that pledge. So, Matilde, I rely on your duty and obedience."

Before any answer could be given, Prince Reginald was announced. Bowing to Matilde as he passed, he embraced the unexpected visitor, who cried, "I have news for you, my son! but we will speak of business elsewhere. Think of what I said. Countess Matilde, and remember you have a father."

As Reginald trod, with Rodolphe, the vaulted gallery that led towards the Queen Dowager's apartments, the latter said, "I am come, my friend, to give the hand of Matilde to him who deserves such a prize:—think you I shall succeed?"

"It would be presumptuous to say you will; and if I am the person destined for such happiness, it would be contrary to my opinion to say you can."

Rodolphe pushed back a door which led to a gallery, on the wall of which were traced the

figures of gods and goddesses in their Olympian nudity. They entered a small anti-chamber: a single lamp burnt dimly on the table. Reginald heard these words:—"Remember the Earl of Kent!" Every thing was still: there was a floating sound, like that of footsteps dying away. They advanced, and Reginald beheld Queen Isabel reclining on a couch, in an attitude of deep reflection. The noise aroused the Queen; and, perceiving Rodolphe, she burst into an exclamation of surprise and joy. Reginald retraced his steps, satisfied the Queen would more love him absent than like him present.

CHAP. XXVII.

A DEATH.

THE preparations for the King's departure were nearly completed. Rodolphe was presented to Edward; and, after the ceremony, retired to the apartment of the Baroness d'Arnheim, while Reginald rode towards the forest. In the deep ravine, near the steep front of the rock, Ethelred was seated on a projecting root of an oak, and Alathæa reclining near him on a bench, covered with the skins of wild animals. She rose at his approach; but Ethelred made a sign that his mind was occupied in the mystery of his profession. The bride was not inclined to mystery: she took the Prince's arm, and strolled with him into the forest.

"It appears to me, Lucius," said Reginald, "that you would be happier were you resident in

London:—you must know that the English ladies are very curious, and addicted to astrology; you may serve yourself and your monarch by certain means which will increase your own fortune, while it forwards that of Edward. I rely on your secresy. Here is a ring: I give it to my page: if at any future period I can serve that page, the sight of this ring will ensure the performance of my now pledged word."

Alathæa felt almost overpowered, while she said, "Your kindness and protection of me have more than repaid my poor services. Since I have parted from you I have not known a moment's happiness, except during the time of the royal visit. Ethelred has good qualities; but he has no refinement. I feel that one who has studied and practised the theory of art and grace, who has read the seductive language of classic poetry, cannot easily submit to such a fate: but, when you depart, I *will* submit myself to Ethelred."

During the time this conversation occupied, Ethelred had learned from Umptikin that a lady

required his presence: it was the Countess Matilde. The Saxon led her through a new entrance to the cavern, and there replied to her queries: "There is, lady, a knight in this forest whose fate is connected with yours: a heavy cloud has passed across his planet, and deep shades surround him. He will seek your hand;—see you refuse it not." Matilde, without answering, retired. As she passed from the entrance, she perceived Reginald seated on the bench where Alathæa had reclined. She watched his abstraction, and imagined it related to the shadows of fate to which the Saxon had alluded.

"Come, my friend," exclaimed she, "it is not manly to indulge in grief." Reginald started up, astonished at the unexpected presence of Matilde.

"Ethelred has informed me," continued the Countess, "of your misfortune; but I trust the gloom will soon pass away."

"You are very kind, lady, for thus interesting yourself in the fortunes of one unworthy of your notice."

"Reginald de Vavasour must always be an object of interest to Matilde."

On arriving at the castle, the following letter was delivered to our hero from Robert d'Artois:—

"Your mother has breathed her last; you may therefore peruse the contents of the accompanying packet; and, if you choose to make them known to the person whom, next yourself, I consider most interested in the disclosure, there exists now no hindrance to your so doing."

CHAP. XXVIII.

CONFESSION.

"When this meets the eye of Reginald de Vavasour, the writer will be numbered with those who have neither been good enough to be recorded for their virtues, nor wicked enough to be detested for their vices. It is the custom among persons of high distinction to affiance their children, while almost in their cradles; hands are betrothed, while hearts are left to their natural workings; and human nature, prone to error, imbibes affections which frequently require more than human exertion to subdue. These are the sentiments of one who, favored by the richest gifts of nature, fell a sacrifice to error; from the fatal effects of which she was saved, in order to live a repentant life. When the contents of this paper are known, the writer entreats the document may be destroyed. There exists but one individual who is aware of the

truth, and that is the kindest of human beings,—the most devoted of friends; who sacrificed her own fame to save the life and honor of her mistress. When I am gone, treat her, my Reginald, as the mother which she has been believed to be. Years have passed since three brothers, the handsomest men of their age, were married to three young women,—two of them sisters. The eldest of the sisters was heiress of her father's wealth, a great part of which was to be placed at her own disposal. The three young wives were, by nature, vain coquettes, and expected greater homage than their handsome husbands felt inclined to pay. In the household establishment of two of these ladies were two young gentlemen, who had no great claims to personal attractions,—on the contrary, might be considered as rather ill-shaped than otherwise; but they were the most assiduous of flatterers, as well as the most finished of coxcombs. They contrived to insinuate themselves into the good graces of their mistresses, and for a long time the mutual attachments remained undiscovered; but at length the punishment, merited it is

true, but severely inflicted, fell on their devoted heads. One of the ladies was strangled, by order of her husband; and the other, after seven years' confinement, was, by a papal decree, repudiated, on pretext of near kin, and died a most sincere penitent, having taken the veil. The father of the injured husbands was much blamed for not preventing the crime, or concealing the infamy from the public eye. I must now come to the story of the surviving sister. Shortly after her marriage, a young English nobleman came to court: she had conceived an attachment for him while under her father's care. Some evil-disposed person poisoned the mind of her husband, who, in rage and jealousy, left the court: his wife retired to a small château, in the forest of St. Germain. The foreigner, by bribes, obtained admittance to the château; and, alas! found too easy access to the heart of an inexperienced woman, smarting under false suspicion, and angry at desertion. The companion of the handsome but ill-fated young man, was a person of noble family, and now of high religious distinction.

One evening, returning from the château, the Englishman was way-laid and murdered, and his body thrown into the Seine. His friend was accustomed always to meet him at a particular time; but on this ill-fated evening, the lover had departed at an earlier hour. The unhappy lady was attacked by a severe fever, from which she recovered by slow degrees; but still appeared to be incapable of leaving her chamber. For some time it became necessary to save by stratagem her own life, as well as that of another, who, at all events, was innocent. A child was born, and the physician in attendance on the lady declared her illness hypochondriac; in consequence of which change of air was recommended. She was the favorite of her husband's father, and he recommended retirement to her native country. Her father dying soon after her arrival, she inherited his wealth; and her husband, hearing of his wife's illness, and her father's death, entreated forgiveness for his unjust suspicions. After their return to Paris, the discoveries, before related, of the sister's conduct

were made; and it had also been traced out that a child was sent from the château in the forest. The husband's suspicions were again roused, and the lady was sent to prison. After the punishment inflicted on her unfortunate sister, the father seemed most anxious that his favorite should escape; and he sent for the lady, her companion, who acknowledged the child to be hers. The physician, who attended both her and her mistress, as well as the sage-femme, swore that they had frequently seen the mother of the child before her confinement, and that it was positively the person called Madame Elisabeth. The father was himself satisfied; but the husband said the world must be satisfied also. The lady was tried, and honorably acquitted; and her husband was the first to acknowledge the justice of the sentence. They lived as happily as great people can expect to live, and their children were eventually married to their satisfaction. On the approach of death, the husband thus addressed his weeping wife:—'I have erred against you, and

the world has said you erred against me: I was the original cause; and, whatever my suspicions might have been, they are long since forgotten. Confess yourself to Heaven; repent, if repentance be necessary; but keep your own secret.' "You, my Reginald, are, as I have heard, contracted to a wealthy and beautiful young person, of high rank. The fortune you possess, you owe to me; the rank you have gained is won by your own valour. Philippe of Valois will never be your friend, if he suspects you to be my son. How often have I wished to see and bless you, but dreaded a discovery during my life! As my last moments are approaching, I may pray for your happiness, and remove, as far as I can, the cloud that hangs over your existence. Though the child of error, you are of noble blood; and a princess need not feel shame in swearing to obey and honor you: but if she scorn the hand of Reginald de Vavasour, because he is illegitimate, tell her his own conduct has made him a prince; and if his mother had

added hypocrisy to error, she might have made him a ——.

"Accept my parting benediction: I die a sincere penitent; and pray, that from the book of life my moments of error may be obliterated. I have endeavoured to wash out the sins of my youth with my tears: add your prayers to mine, my son, for both your parents; continue to walk the paths of virtue and honor; serve, while you can serve, the cause of France, but do not submit to the tyranny even of a king. Adieu! Think of your mother, who now claims no other title than

"JEANNE."

CHAP. XXIX.

AN EXPLANATION.

HAVING perused this last legacy of maternal affection, Reginald remained in the same uncertainty as to who his parents were; but he was now convinced that he owed his existence to an unlawful passion. His first impulse was to resign his pretensions to Matilde, and his second to consult Queen Isabel:—the latter he followed.

"Before I destroy this document," said he, "I pray you, madame, to peruse it." Isabel read attentively, and sighed as she exclaimed,—"The Lady Jeanne is then at rest:—peace be with her!—would that I were laid in the same cold bed!" Reginald did not interrupt the train of thought which occupied the mind of the Queen. He heard her mutter the words, Rodolphe—Mortimer—Jeanne—Reginald;—at last, suddenly turning to-

wards him, Isabel said. "What is your intention?"

"To fly from hence, and seek in foreign climes a name and a country."

"Fly not: you will live to wear the title and honors of your father: your country should be England:—marry Matilde."

"But will Matilde of Hainault marry the unowned offspring of illicit love?"

"Matilde has spurned the proffered hand of our son, the Earl of Cornwall. Love may have counselled her to turn her eyes elsewhere: take a woman's advice, and hear your dismissal from her own mouth."

"I am too proud, Queen Isabel, to bear dismissal. I think it more noble to retire honorably from the field, than to be driven from it with disdain."

"When you entered the field, were you not an unknown youth?—now, you are all that a maiden can desire. I will not flatter you for your person, but I may praise your manly bearing: few women could look on you kneeling at their feet, and say.

'Begone!' If Matilde feels a preference for you, be assured she will not break her heart because her lover is not the heir of a throne; and if she did not prefer you to all other men, I am confident you would have no pleasure in being master of her wealth."

"'Tis not for her wealth I seek the hand of the heiress of Hainault:—it is from feelings of honor, and a conviction of preference to all other women. To say that I passionately love the Lady Matilde would be to speak falsely; but in saying that I choose her for my wife, I speak with a pure and open heart."

"Then speak to her whose heart you seek to win: and mind me, Reginald! in these days, so that the child be of noble blood by both parents, it is not absolutely necessary that the priest should have sanctioned his birth." Reginald thanked the Queen for her kind advice, and hastened to the Baroness d'Arnheim.

"I come, madame," said he, "under the impulse of painful feeling, to request an interview with the Countess Matilde. My departure is

fixed; and I entreat of you, most amiable and venerable lady, to use your influence over your fair niece, and obtain for me permission to communicate tidings which require privacy."

Patience was sent to the Countess; and on her return conducted Reginald to a bower formed upon the flat roof of a large square turret, approached only by a parapeted wall. The flagged pathway was protected on either side by strong palisades of a green colour, and arched over with trellis-work covered with creepers. The scene before him formed a strong contrast with the frowning battlements and unfinished towers which surrounded the place on which the bower was formed. Beneath a canopy of green, lined with rose-coloured silk, Matilde was seated: near her lay a lute; and on a table of white marble, supported by the intertwined arms of gilded Cupids, were scattered the manuscripts which she had lately perused. Patience retired, and Reginald endeavoured to compose himself sufficiently for the crisis of his fate. — "You were rightly informed, Countess Matilde," commenced he: "a cloud has

passed over me. A letter from Count Robert d'Artois announces the death of my mother."

"I understood that both your parents had been some time dead," replied Matilde, in a tone of surprise; "and that a mystery hung over your family which was impenetrable?"

"Queen Isabel had reasons for throwing a veil over the history of my birth."

"Am I acquainted with the name of the parent you have now lost?"

"No, Lady! since the death of her husband she has lived in strict retirement. I never, to my recollection, saw her."

"Then you have not to regret the loss of an affectionate parent?"

"Still she was my parent, and evidently showed that she possessed affections. It appears, that I was the cause of her grief."

"Unintentionally, on your part, I must suppose: for it is not probable that you, whom every one praises, could be so unnatural and so unkind; nor, if you were so, would you reveal it to me."

"I came here, Countess Matilde, to reveal

every thing to you: but you have received my news in so cold a manner, that my resolution wavers."

"A soldier, under all circumstances, should be master of himself. I will not act the pedant, and use the expression of the Grecian sage, — 'I only give thee advice.'"

"To speak with the reverence of a son, I must first acknowledge, that the fortune I possess, in a great degree, arises out of the liberality of my mother. It is not for aggrandisement I speak, when I say that I returned from the wars in Italy, where fresh distinctions were proffered to me, in the hope of being successful in a suit upon which my happiness depended. I found the object of that suit as cold as marble. Your present kindness, Lady, has afforded me an opportunity to open my heart, and to receive either positive dismissal, or affectionate condolence. Before I reveal the secret of one now no more, over whose grave I shall shed as bitter tears as ever fell from a soldier's eyes,—I would wish to ask whether my conduct has destroyed my audacious hopes? I will call

them audacious; for though not absolutely unknown, I am absolutely unacknowledged. I have neither name nor family to boast of. It is true, I am a Peer of France, and a Prince bearing various titles; I am decorated with orders and badges;—and yet I am too truly the humble Reginald. Humbled as I am in my own estimation, I still feel pride as regards others; and while I acknowledge my misfortunes, and confess my errors, I am anxious to know whether they are to receive the punishment of crimes, or the oblivion of follies; whether I am to be discarded from the family I love, by the fair princess I admire and respect; or received with kindness by her whom I could love with all that sincerity which admiration and respect create, and all that warmth which grace, beauty, and modesty inspire." The Prince knelt and kissed the hand of Matilde, touching it with his moistened eyes.

"You ask, Prince Reginald, for an explicit declaration, and I will give it with the candour of a sister. Aurélie knows my willingness to fulfil my father's promise,—not solely for the perform-

ance of that promise, but for affection towards my brother, as well as regard for the person in whom he is so warmly interested. It may be imagined that some painful thoughts might arise in a mind naturally proud, when aware of the existence of a previous attachment for another, which separation had not weakened, certainly had not destroyed: — this impression had been too strong easily to be effaced. The person so loved, and so esteemed, again hastened to the field of battle, and again returned victorious. Did he return alone to the object of his avowed love? No: he came to the very court where she resided, to the very palace of her near relative,—accompanied by whom?—a woman in the disguise of a page!"

"All is, alas! too true; but there are excuses even for this apparently inexcusable conduct. To attempt a palliation in the first instance would implicate another: but the guilty knight may say, whatever his ideas were as to momentary pleasure, they had no connexion with matrimonial happiness. Every thing relative to my page

I am willing to relate to La Baronne, your aunt, and abide by her decisions."

"I am contented; speak freely."

"Before I solicit the treasures of your heart and hand, I wish you to peruse this paper."

Matilde took it with a trembling hand. Reginald withdrew into the gallery. On his return, he found the youthful and haughty beauty transformed into a picture of grief. "Are these, Matilde," cried he, "tears of commiseration for my fate, or of sorrow for the pain which you think it necessary to inflict, by saying—'Leave me.'"

"Without knowing who the lady was, I pity, while I blame her."

"She was, as Queen Isabel informs me, a Countess in her own right, and by the right of her husband——"

"Stop the utterance of words which will reveal who she was: she wished to die forgiven, forgotten, and unknown. You are of noble blood, and have further ennobled yourself by valour and conduct: neither stain nor reproach rests on you; for the accusations of a damsel, on points of

weakness, will not discredit a knight. I honor you for your candour, and I pity you for your misfortunes. You talk of admiration and respect: those are cold words. You speak of what might happen, of what you could feel. Why solicit acceptance, when undetermined as to the nature of the sentiment which emboldens you to ask? You, Reginald, are on the eve of accompanying our monarch to France. While absent, we will mutually examine our thoughts. You will become more fitted to propose, and I more willing to accept. Meanwhile, be content with the acknowledgment, that I have long considered you as a friend; and perhaps I feel, as a friend, a greater interest in your welfare than in that even of my brother Agenor."

"Friend and brother are cold terms, and as coldly spoken. Be not the haughty, but the kind Matilde. Nature gave you the warm feelings of love, or jealousy would not have crept into your bosom. You, who are so superior to those whom you have deigned to notice, ought to feel security in the charms you possess, — too sure of pre-emi-

nence to dread rivalry. Beauty united with virtue is seated on a throne of marble, and surrounded by adamantine barriers to repress the intruder; while beauty, unsupported by prudence, reclines on the couch of luxury, and courts the admiration of the young, the gay, the inconsiderate. When the throne of marble is exchanged for the bower of evergreen, and the adamantine barriers for twisted wreaths of roses, then beauty may also take charity for her guide, may raise the unhappy suppliant from his bended knees, and console him by saying, 'Be worthy of my love!'"

Matilde was leaning on the shoulder of her lover, in all the delight of a maiden listening to a declaration of passion, when the dignity of woman was roused by approaching footsteps; and she had time to release herself, and allow the Prince to rise from the ground, before Patience entered the bower, and announced Queen Philippa. "I come, my love," said the Queen, "to bring you news of moment. I know how adverse you were to a marriage with our brother of Cornwall: he has fallen into a state of ill-health, which has

determined him not to marry, and makes me more decided on the necessity of giving heirs to the crown. The Prince has honorably withdrawn his pretensions to your hand in favor of——I crave your pardon,——Prince Reginald! I did not perceive your presence, sir."

Matilde blushed deeply at the manner the Queen laid her emphasis and stops, and Reginald was confused. "I fear my presence," observed he, "is an intrusion, and humbly take my leave."

"Sir Reginald, there is news for you also: a vessel has arrived with an officer express from the Pope; there is also arrived a German of some note; and much public business awaits your leisure; but a lady's bower has more of captivation in it than the council-chamber of a king."

Reginald bowed very low and very gracefully, and departed.

The Queen continued: — "Matilde, that is a noble youth, and I would be well content were he your husband."

"He has demanded my hand."

"And you have granted it, have you not?

"No, madame, let him attend King Edward to France, and learn more respect for maiden opinion, and I will then answer him."

"Haughty as ever, Matilde! but let me tell you, Flanders is not as it was; and our family will require a soldier's arm. Philippe may one day tread our land in other guise than that of auxiliary, and such a sword as Reginald's would be worth its weight in pearls; besides, he has a noble soul, a handsome person, and a warm heart."

"Too warm, I fear, madame!"

"Oh! you are jealous because he has sinned. Well, Matilde, take my advice; believe the best part of what you hear, and reject the worst. What we women call sin, men call pleasure. Reginald has done the cause of humanity great service; he has particularly benefited you and yours; and yet when he offers his hand ——"

"I have not rejected his offer, but have demanded time."

"There is no time, Matilde, like the present: I was affianced to my Edward, almost at our first interview."

"Yes, but it was to Edward, the heir of England's throne; while Reginald is only——" and Matilde handed the letter to the Queen. The good, the affectionate, virtuous Philippa was deeply afflicted for one so penitent and so unhappy. "For my sake," exclaimed she, "accept the hand of Reginald. His own conduct, and his misfortunes, doubly endear him to me. I know my Edward loves him, and will love you the more for becoming the wife and monitress of my knight:—besides, I have interested motives for pressing you to unite your fate with his. Reginald is as wise in the council, as he is brave in the field. A crisis is at hand, and my Edward will want such a friend."

CHAP. XXX.

OLD ACQUAINTANCES.

On returning to his apartment, Reginald found Count Rodolphe impatiently awaiting his presence. "You have seen my daughter; does she dare dispute my authority?"

"Your daughter is all loveliness and all kindness."

"That is well; now for my own affairs. You must know, Reginald, that when you were last in England I also was here. In a particular chamber I encountered a person of importance in this country; we quarrelled, and I challenged him to combat. The place appointed was in the territory of the emperor: I hastened thither; but, instead of meeting my foe, was thrown into prison. By the aid of the green man I escaped, and am now returned to defy the caitiff to his face, in presence of the brave Edward."

" Be assured the lists will be open at your call."

A page announced a stranger. It was Lorenzo de Lunheim. " I have letters for you, my friend, of some moment," said he; " and Count Rodolphe, I have one for you also from my poor sister; but I fear in this court it will have but little effect." Rodolphe bit his lip, and retired. " Well," continued Lorenzo, " I have given my truant brother a rebuke, as well as an incitement to his curiosity; for you know he cannot read his wife's complaints. No matter! I will read them for him; nay, I know them by heart, for I dictated the epistle myself. Poor soul! in her there is not a single spark to kindle a fire with."

" No one can accuse you of want of fire. You appear the same gallant, gay cavalier as when we parted."

" Life is too short, Prince, to be sorrowful; and if I were inclined to be serious, there is always something ridiculous occurring which prevents my giving way to melancholy. What think you of my meeting two old acquaintances among a cargo of Dutch worthies coming over to lend money to

King Edward? One was the lively Claudine. She soon recognised me, and treading on my foot, placed her finger on her lip. We took an early opportunity of talking over old matters; but Mynheer Sprackhenhausen took umbrage, and called me to account. We proceeded to the fore part of the vessel to settle the affair, and were tilting away, when the stern voice of no less a personage than the green man interrupted us. He twirled me round as if I were a leaf; and, speaking some jargon in a decided tone to my friend, he quietly replaced his sword; and I, not seeing any further occasion for my presence, and thinking the lady a more agreeable companion than her husband, returned to the cabin."

"What brings De Lunheim here?"

"He comes, it is said, on special business; and it is he who brings these money-making Mynheers to assist Edward, in case he chooses to war with France. But I will leave you to your letters, and look after Claudine."

"Give her this purse, in remembrance of the agreeable supper-party in the Tower."

"Well thought of, Prince! By my faith, I can spare her none, for my journey has run away with my assortment of gold, and Pope John does not pay in advance."

CHAP. XXXI.

A CAUTION.

THE letter that came from the Pope was written by Petrarch: it expressed great anxiety for the continuance of peace and amity between his two well-beloved sons, and John offered to act as intermediator in case any difference should exist, or any unexpected disagreement arise. His Holiness then gave his reasons for preferring a private communication, instead of publicly addressing the monarchs through their ambassadors at his court. "You, my son," wrote he to Reginald, "are the special envoy of King Philippe, and the friend of King Edward. It must be your most anxious wish to conciliate, and to you I can speak as a

friend; but if I address myself to kings, as head of the church, I may appear as assuming too much upon the grounds of lately-recovered power. That recovery I owe principally to you; and, as I look forward to giving you my benediction as the husband of a scion of the house of Hainault, a distinguished member of which family now shares the honors of the British throne,—it is natural that I should feel as great an interest in the welfare of King Edward, as it is politic that I should feel in that of the older and more experienced Philippe, who upholds my cause against the arch-heretic Louis."

Reginald demanded audience, and was received by Edward in his closet. When he had mentioned those matters which related more to public than private affairs, the King, seeing there was some concealment, expressed a wish himself to read the letter. "I wish," said he, "to see the terms you are on with our Holy Father. Ha! by St. George, the Pope promises you his benediction; and, if we interfere to prevent the marriage, his Holiness will excommunicate us. My Philippa tells me

your suit prospers with our ward. Your friend might have aided you, but you would not deign to ask assistance."

"Sire, I was placed in a state of particular delicacy."

"I know it, my friend, and participate in your feelings. The princely blood that flows in your veins makes me consider you still more worthy of our friendship; and when you are our cousin, I may, without offence to the proudest nobles of England, bestow some signal mark of my esteem: for the present, I must bid you farewell, as a special envoy from a foreign court demands an audience."

"It is the Count de Lunheim, sire; a brave soldier, a lover of the chase, and an experienced tilter: but I beseech you, sire, to be cautious. His master is a brave and enterprising prince, but a defeated leader. He is threatened in his own country by the nobles of Germany, and in Lombardy by the united forces of the Pope and the Tuscans; and also by the King of Naples, with

whom I would advise your Highness to court alliance. Louis would naturally rejoice in obtaining the support of England; but what efficient aid can England afford, and what equivalent can Louis offer to a politic prince, sufficient to induce him to embark in a bad, nay, in an unjust cause? The time may arrive, sire, when it might be politic to form an alliance with Louis; but this is not the hour: you have wisely, sire, determined upon a prudent course, and will, I am sure, as wisely adhere to your determination." Reginald bowed, and withdrew.

The green man little thought, while he was pacing up and down the gallery of arms, that his old companion was preparing the monarch of England's ear for the reception of the crafty offers of which he was the bearer.

Edward listened patiently to the proposals, and replied:—"Tell the Emperor of Germany that Edward of England thanks him for his offers, but has promised to do homage for his dominions in France."

In vain did the Count allude to the first Edward, to Isabel's claim to the crown, or to the degradation of kneeling to an upstart.

"Philippe of Valois," rejoined Edward, "is now King of France, and Edward but Duke of Aquitaine. Were Philippe Earl of Cornwall, which Heaven forbid! he must bend the knee to Edward."

The Count rose to retire, when the King requested his attendance at their family repast. "You will meet an old acquaintance, whom, although an enemy, you must respect."

"If it is the victorious Prince of San Germano, I will meet him on neutral ground, as a friend."

"It is Reginald de Vavasour of whom I speak, and whom I better know by that name than by the high titles which he so justly bears. You must admit that he is a knight whose honor, integrity, and valour are supereminent."

CHAP. XXXII.

THE CHALLENGES.

When every thing had been prepared that was fit to inspire the King and people of France with a due notion of the wealth and power of England, Edward summoned his knights to meet him at the Castle of Dover. Count Rodolphe publicly challenged Mortimer, and in that town preparations were made accordingly. The King, Queen, and court were assembled, but Isabel did not appear.

"What is the cause of quarrel?" said Edward.

Lorenzo advanced towards the throne, saying, "Rodolphe de Montleans accuses Mortimer of March of cowardice and treachery."

"Where is the accused?"

"I appear for him," said the young Lord Mortimer, "and declare the accusation to be false."

The trumpets sounded, and Mortimer was speedily carried from the field. A silence of

some minutes followed, and was broken by the tones of a distant trumpet. An esquire rode into the lists, and throwing a glove at the feet of Reginald, dared him to single combat. Matilde turned pale. Hawkwood rode forward to accept the challenge: he then retired to arm his chief; and the knights crowded to their places to view the approaching combat. On one side was planted the banner of the challenger: it was a golden boar. The steel-clad knight rode slowly into the field, bowing only to Matilde: Reginald galloped in, and gracefully saluted Philippa and Matilde. In the first course, the challenger was unhorsed. The battle-axes were then essayed, and that of the challenger broke. The knights drew their swords. In rage and despair the challenger made a lunge at the bars of his adversary's visor, which Reginald parried by throwing up his sword. The upraised arm left a point undefended, and Reginald passed his sword under the shoulder-blade of the assailant, who fell covered with blood.

"You have received due punishment," cried Edward, "for an unknightly act. You do not

deserve your life; but if Heaven preserve you from this wound, I hope you may live to merit a better fortune." The only reply was a long and deep groan. The wounded knight took from his left gauntlet a white glove, and pressing it to his wound, waved it over his head, fell again on the ground, and was carried off. Our hero silently gazed on the retiring group, when his reveries were interrupted by the arrival of an esquire with the horse and armour of the vanquished knight. Reginald turned from these towards Matilde, who had watched the contest with anxious eyes. When she saw the banner, she recollected the prophecy of the Saxon; and when she beheld the white glove, she recognised the knight, who was now probably no more. The king requested Reginald's presence. "You, Sir Reginald," said he, "have slain one of our young nobility; and, though justified by the principle of self-defence, yet it is an act complained of by several of our knights, who are anxious to revenge the fallen youth. It has been unusual with us to take advantage of an opening to inflict a mortal wound, unless there

existed just cause for mortal quarrel. It omens ill for our intended purpose."

"What I have done, Lord Edward, I shall be be prepared to sustain to-morrow before thee, and these assembled illustrious ladies, with my life; but I must ask the King of England whether English nobles are permitted to assail the visors of their opponents?"

"Assuredly not."

"Then, sire, it was by such an attempt that the upraised arm opened a way for my sword's point; but I struck not with any force, and wished to punish, not to slay."

"My friend, you have acted generously. The recreant's life is in your hands: his spurs shall be hacked off."

"No, sire, he is sufficiently punished; and if he survives, a reproof from such a person as King Edward will be felt more keenly than public degradation, at the hands of some common officer."

Reginald retired to his pavilion, where Ro-

dolphe, De Lunheim, and Lorenzo awaited to offer their swords, in case any of the English nobles chose to take up the quarrel of the vanquished. "Remain with me, my friends," said he, "and partake a soldier's fare; for I fear Hawkwood has prepared no better entertainment, imagining I should be a guest at the royal table: but I am not invited; and if I were, I would not go, my hands still wet with English blood." While Reginald was unarming, a billet arrived from the Countess Matilde: it ran as follows:—

"The Queen did not invite her knight, for reasons which may be easily understood; but she begs his acceptance of some aid towards entertaining his friends, who, she knows, are now surrounding him. The King will not allow insult to be offered to the Knight of France: he has declared, that if a spear be raised against you, or a gauntlet thrown down, he will appear at your side: even were he not a king, Edward is dreaded as the most adroit and courageous knight of England. We ought, for the sake of mercy, to wish

that the challenger may live; but we are fully sensible of your forbearance:—if he should recover, beware, brave Prince, of such a foe!"

CHAP. XXXIII.

PARTING SALUTATIONS.

The repast being concluded in the royal hall, Edward thus addressed his assembled nobles: "When I relate to you the circumstances which have occurred in this day's tourney, I am confident all will feel that the honor of our country has been stained by the hand of an assassin, whose body has been removed beyond the reach of our power. The name and address given unto our heralds and marshals are false; and the caitiff, who aimed an unknightly blow at a prince under our special protection, with whom he could have no personal quarrel, has been consigned to an obscure grave, or removed to another country. It behoves us, therefore, to treat Prince Regi-

nald, not only with the dignity due to an ambassador, but with the regard belonging to his private worth, as well as public character. It is my intention to line the road with troops from his pavilion to the sea; and I trust that every knight who loves his sovereign will meet Edward of England at mid-day on the beach, to pay the proper marks of respect to our friends and visitors." The health of Prince Reginald was drunk with enthusiasm, and Edward hastened to the tent of his friend.

When Hawkwood announced that the King was arrived, the guests rose to retire, and bowed as they passed the royal visitor, who was wrapped in his mantle of guard. "I come, Reginald, to announce that the nobles and knights of England intend wishing you a prosperous voyage, on the borders of the sea, to-morrow at mid-day."

"This is an additional kindness of your Highness: I am quite overpowered."

"I come also to desire you to accompany me to the apartments of our Queen, there to bid, for a short while only I hope, farewell! To-morrow we

shall be much employed; and now every thing is still, and the chaste moon will guide us to the bower of virtue and beauty." As they passed along, the sentinels challenged; but an esquire, who walked a few paces in front, satisfied inquiries, and they arrived at the private door of the royal apartment, if such an uncomfortable residence could be so called. Philippa and Matilde were the only occupiers of a small square tower, which was meant to be the ladies' retiring-room: Matilde was pensive, and the Queen in low spirits, at the approaching separation from her loved lord. "Would that I were to accompany you, Edward!" cried she.

"Would you were, my Philippa! but as it is decided it must not be so, do not let us display a wavering character to our court. It is high time to move free from all restraint, and it will not be easy to escape from the chains of Mortimer, if we do not show a character of resolution. Matilde, the fatigue of this day seems to have overpowered you: have you nothing to say to the knight whom

you so desired to see, before he leaves our inhospitable shore?"

"Do not use such terms, sire; especially to me, who have been the child of its protection. Here I have found what I have almost in vain sought elsewhere; and here I hope to find the harbour of my hopes,—the pleasures of domestic enjoyment."

Reginald took Matilde's hand; but she was silent, and her downcast eyes prevented him from guessing the secret of her heart. There was a palpitation in the pulse; there was occasional change from cold to fever in the hand; but the countenance remained firm, though pallid. Feeling embarrassed by the situation in which he was placed, Reginald took advantage of a moment's unobservance, and kissed the hand he held, whispering, "Farewell!" Matilde turned towards him her tearful eyes, and almost said, adieu! "To you, Queen of England," continued our hero, "I owe more than a humble knight can ever hope to pay; but if assurance of the safety and comfort of your loved lord can give aught of

happiness, then trust the word of Reginald for the fulfilment of that assurance. To make his Highness happy in his absence from your celestial charms would be impossible; but to endeavour to make him feel contented and amused, will be the duty of the knight who now humbly takes his leave."

"Reginald, you are our friend, and I trust will be our cousin," observed Edward; "the Queen considers you such, and offers her cheek."

Reginald lightly touched it with his own, and Matilde was compelled to follow her relation's example, of which Reginald took full advantage; and, while Philippa turned away her head, imprinted a soldier's salute on the rosy lips of his mistress.

CHAP. XXXIV.

A TENT SCENE.

In the inner apartment of his pavilion, Reginald was surprised to see a person muffled up in disguise, and who cautioned him to silence. The Prince dismissed all his attendants but his page, whom he ordered to seat himself at the entrance. A few sentries only marked that something was living beneath the stilly atmosphere of an unclouded night. From the sleeping apartment of the pavilion, there was another portico, which commanded a fine view of the sea, and of the royal encampment. Having unfolded the curtains, the stranger threw back his mantle,—it was Lucius.

"This is not right, Alathæa," said Reginald; "you are now the wife of Ethelred, and must forget you ever knew another,—even a nominal husband."

"I can never forget you," was the reply: "Ethelred ordered me to warn you against danger. Now hear the message of the Saxon:—'On the evening of this day, San Germano will escape peril; but he must beware of visiting a certain burial-ground: there the dagger of the assassin may find him. His destiny is connected with secret assaults, and such only has he to dread. In the open field his courage and skill will protect him; but between him and concealed foes others must interpose.' These are the Saxon's words, and they incline me to demand the Countess's permission to resume my place near your person."

"Do not, Lucius! do not, Alathæa! I will grant any request but that. Matilde would think I wished it, and perhaps she would think rightly; for, Lucius, I will own there is great pleasure in being watched over by one whose heart is full of affection:—but it must not be."

"Then, the boon I ask is to watch over my master, this—the last night of his remaining on the same land with his unhappy Roman."

" I have promised to grant any other request but that of an appeal to Matilde: there is my couch; recline on it: I will hear no remonstrances."

" It is, perhaps, my Prince, the last time I shall ever say good night to one whom I have so loved."

" Parting from friends, Lucius, is always painful: but weep not!"

" It is not in my nature to weep; but I feel that when you leave this island I shall have no friend within its sea-bound limits."

Reginald assured her of the protection of Edward and Philippa, on which Alathæa became more tranquil. He retired, but was soon disturbed by the exclamation, " Surge!" Reginald felt the soft hand, and heard the whispers of Alathæa. The lamp was burning feebly. " There is a man," said she, " in the inner tent."

" Order the page to move the sentinel to the other entrance, and we must seize the intruder." This was done, but no man could be found. " As I live," cried Lucius, " I heard him strike." The

light was taken towards the bed, and a richly-mounted Spanish stiletto was found sticking in the mantle, which Reginald had carelessly thrown down. Lucius put the poniard in the folds of her cloak, saying, "Be assured, Prince, I will discover the story of this weapon; for, if I mistake not, I have seen it before." Previously to day-break Lucius withdrew, and Reginald undressed and retired to his couch, ordering his page to awaken him two hours before mid-day.

CHAP. XXXV.

THE EMBARKATION.

Reginald took particular pains in adorning his person for his farewell appearance on the English shore, as he knew that the ladies would be present in the Royal Gallery. Before he left his tent, he looked towards the sea, and beheld knights galloping in various directions, standards and banners flying, and an alley formed, by two lines

of troops, to a plain in front of the steps arranged for the royal embarkation. At mid-day precisely, a messenger arrived to announce the completion of the preparations: it was Lucius, dressed in a superb English habit of the royal livery. Lorenzo marched at the head of the Prince's German guard, Count Rodolphe walked by his side, and Hawkwood commanded the guard which brought up the rear. Musicians, with warlike instruments, were placed at proper intervals; and Reginald arrived within the space where the King was stationed with his knights: the guard halted.

Reginald advanced, cap in hand, and bowed low to the assembled nobles. As he passed along the line of knights, accompanied by Edward, he returned each individual salutation; and arriving at the gallery where the ladies were stationed, his obeisance was so graceful, yet so humble, that the populace shouted applause. The Queen threw a wreath of myrtle, and Matilde one of roses: to each was affixed a small billet. Reginald passed the wreaths over his left arm, and with an unsteady step reached the boat which was to con-

duct him to the French ship of war prepared to convey him to the opposite shore. The King then embarked; and his train having reached their vessels, the sails were loosened, and the royal fleet was wafted across the channel with a favorable breeze.

In the retirement of his cabin, Reginald learned from Lucius that it was Queen Philippa who had ordered the apparent youth's equipment and attendance. "I revealed," continued he, "the full particulars, and her Highness felt as Matilde would feel, were she not too much in love to see clearly. I am well armed; for, in addition to my Roman sword, this stiletto, intended for you, may yet punish, through his own agency, the intender of evil. Ethelred will watch your stars, and correspond with you by means of Umptikin. He can be trusted. Do you remember this weapon?"

"Yes, it was once worn by Hermann."

"And exchanged by him with a merchant for a sword. I know the man; and by tracing the buyer, may discover the would-be assassin."

Reginald thought that if Matilde was displeased

it must be with the Queen. Lucius assumed his former station, and left little for the other pages to do but amuse themselves. The King felt his spirits lighter, when, after two days' passage, he was welcomed by Reginald to the kingdom of France. The gaiety of Rodolphe and Lorenzo, contrasted with the solemnity of De Lunheim, much amused his Highness; and Reginald's mind was too fully occupied by friendship and politics for time to hang heavily upon his hands.

CHAP. XXXVI.

URSULA.

In order to amuse Reginald, Lucius related the following, which may explain partly, what would otherwise appear wrapped in mystery:—"You know, Prince, that the mother of Umptikin was formerly the cara of my Saxon: they quarrelled upon her giving birth to such a monster, and he dismissed her from his household. Ursula wan-

dered to Italy, and became useful to Aristobulus, who calls himself my father."

" He acknowledged to me you were the daughter of a prince."

" You could not give me a father I would not prefer to that vicious pander. When Ursula saw me, she returned to England as an envoy between the two sages; the marriage was arranged, and you were fixed on as the means for bringing it to bear. Aristobulus knows not the word delicacy, and Ethelred is more intent upon future prospects than such trifles as the virtue of his wife. Aristobulus has persuaded him that I shall hereafter give birth to a son, who shall be himself astrologer to a King, and founder of a sect which is to govern the world; but he also told Ethelred he must await the hour the fates permit. Aristobulus calculates upon the general chances of the marriage contract, and he also calculates on your preference remaining until you are married: he therefore tells Ethelred, he must await the fates. Ursula was the woman you made prisoner at Viterbo: she has accompanied your troops in vari-

ous disguises: she has conveyed information to Ethelred; and from her the Saxon learned that there was a conspiracy formed against your life."

"Reward her with this purse, Lucius! and now we will talk on pleasanter subjects than conspiracies. Have you become more reconciled to your husband, and more contented with your abode?"

"Ethelred is nominally my husband, but I have not resided with him."

"Where then has been your retirement?"

"Near to your person—in your household."

Reginald could not but be sensible of the warm attachment shown to him. "It is strange," said he, "that I should have been so blind as not to discover you under any disguise; and when I have been oppressed with melancholy, and enraged with disappointment, the society of a lovely woman would have restored the tone of my spirits."

"While I was near you, no danger could reach you. As for your sorrows and your anger, they arose from your little combats with Cupid, and in that struggle I was forbidden to interfere. Now you have gained a footing in the damsel's heart;

and if I bring you back to her in safety, she will forgive the rest. Besides, you find it was my sovereign's orders. Philippa did not create any new feeling in your breast, nor did she command me not to revive the old passion, if passion ever existed for one so undeserving as myself. This is the last time I shall ever be your companion. Depend upon it, a very little spark of love soon kindles into a flame. I saw the downcast look: I knew the pulsations of the maiden heart."

"Why did not Matilde say but half what you think she felt?"

"Because the more a woman is enamoured, the more ashamed she is of owning it. There are women in the world of a different nature, and your Cecile is one; but between that captivating creature and Matilde, there are a thousand shades of difference. Cecile is born to rule the Papal Court, smile on its intrigues, further its views, and rob it of its treasures. The Countess Matilde is of a nobler stamp:—she is fitted to adorn a crown;—and ought to be the mother of a line of heroes. Likewise, take the opposites of female

nature, and you find Laura de Sade and Alathæa."

"For my part, I wonder how Petrarch can pursue that shadow!—if a woman looked coldly on me, I would frown on her; but if she looks kindly, I cannot look cold."

"Laura is of a nature suited to the character of Petrarch. He is discontented, and flies from the world to solitude, and from solitude to the world, with the changes of the moon. Laura is his imagined angel, and Laura is, I believe, really a virtuous woman; but depend upon it, she values, if she does not partake in, the passion. Why otherwise should she sit for hours to hear his ravings? Nature destined Laura to make Petrarch a poet:—if she had given way to her passion, her lover would soon have found another object for his imaginings, and Petrarch would, like the bee, have sipped sweets from many flowers, and have become an Ovid or a Horace, glittering instead of shining: for, be assured, shine he will, despite the clouds of ignorance which at present surround him, and dim the lustre of his fame."

CHAP. XXXVII.

HOMAGE.

KING EDWARD arrived at Amiens with the Bishops of London, Winchester, and Lincoln, (all politic prelates,) the Earls of Norfolk and Kent, Henry Lord Percy, and a numerous suite of nobles and knights, attended by one thousand horsemen.

After fifteen days' feasting, Edward entered the cathedral church of Amiens. Philippe appeared to the public view as a prince worthy of the crown which he had gained. He was seated on a superb throne, habited in a long robe of violet velvet, embroidered with golden fleurs-de-lis, crowned with a diadem enriched with precious stones, and holding in his hand a golden sceptre. On each side of Philippe were the Kings of Bohemia, Navarre, and Majorca, with the Dukes of Burgundy, Bourbon, and Lorraine, the Count of Flanders, Robert d'Artois, the Constable Chatil-

lon, the grand chamberlain, the marshals of France, the keeper of the seals, &c. Edward was introduced by Reginald to the royal presence of France, and his appearance was such as to make all rise from their seats, except the King. Edward was dressed in a long robe of crimson velvet, embroidered with golden leopards; his crown was on his head, his sword by his side, and golden spurs at his heels. The great chamberlain advanced to Prince Reginald, and, by Philippe's command, ordered the King of England to take off his crown, sword, and spurs. Reginald, with an ill grace, delivered his sovereign's commands.

"Tell King Philippe to hack them off," was the reply of the warrior king, "if he dares!"

The chamberlain, perceiving the hesitation in obedience, advanced, saying—"It has been a part of the ceremony, established by precedent, that the vassals of France should appear bare-headed and unarmed."

"Have the vassals never appeared armed in the heart of France?" inquired Edward.

"If the Duke of Aquitaine," replied the chamberlain, "refuses the homage, he is at liberty to retire. No injury will be offered to his person."

"Thinkest thou, chamberlain of France! that Edward of England fears personal injury? Tell the King, your master, I will take off the crown of England, in act of courtesy, and that my esquires may remove my spurs, because they have not been won in the field of glory; but this is the sword of my grandfather, Edward, and out of my hands it shall not pass."

The crown was removed, the spurs held by Reginald, but the sword remained. The chamberlain consented that the King should hold the scabbard, pointing the hilt towards the throne, in signal that the weapon was not carried in defiance. Reginald watched the countenance of the royal youth, and he saw suppressed rage and vengeance. He saw the smouldering fire which was destined, ere long, to burst, and destroy half the provinces of the sovereign who wished to humiliate Edward:—but he was silent.

The chamberlain proceeded :—" Sire, vous devenez, comme Duc de Guienne, homme liège du Roi, mon seigneur, qui ci est, et lui promettez foy et loyauté porter ——"

" I will not say Voire," interrupted the English monarch.

A dispute arose, which occupied much time. A strong sensation was excited among the nobles; and those of England regarded each other, uncertain as to the issue of the scene. " If," said the chamberlain, " the Duke of Aquitaine, whom it ill becomes to quarrel with the ceremonies performed by his ancestors, is not willing to do homage, let him resign the possessions, re-assume his crown, and appear here as the visitor of France." Robert d'Artois advanced to Reginald. " Is there no intermediate manner," said the latter, " by which the pride of Edward may be saved, and thereby his object, as well as that of Philippe, accomplished ?"

" I will," said Edward, " search my records, and what my ancestors said, that will I say also." The words were now so couched as to admit of

Edward giving his assent, and the half-finished ceremony was concluded.

In the retirement of his apartment, Edward gave vent to his anger. "By the bones of our ancestor, the first Edward, I could have chopped off the head of that peer who took off my spurs. Some spurs are of more value than heads, and I will win a pair dipped in gore, on the fields of France. Philippe of Valois shall repent of his treatment, this day, of a descendant from a line of kings." Reginald, who was present, could not advise his friend to act against his own sovereign, whose conduct he did not choose to attack, and was not willing to defend. "Reginald," continued Edward, "I shall depart forthwith from this city. I do not fear the power of Philippe, even with the few supporters that I have around me; but it is not politic to trust so haughty a monarch too far; and, as I have refused, he may wish to enforce. Were Edward a prisoner, the kingdom of England would fall an easy prey to the wiles of Mortimer; and while my brother John would be but the shadow of a king, the Earl of March would

play the tyrant. I will hasten back to avoid such a catastrophe."

"King Philippe," answered De Vavasour, "would not play so treacherous a part; and if he did, mine, and a thousand other swords, would be drawn in your defence."

"Philippe may be persuaded to believe me an obstinate vassal, refusing to acknowledge his dignity and rights. Vassals have been punished, and even sovereigns unjustly seized and imprisoned."

The King accordingly left Amiens suddenly, and Reginald accompanied him to the place of embarkation.

CHAP. XXXVIII.

AN ASSASSIN.

KING EDWARD having departed from France, Reginald hastened to the Château de Roye, to throw himself at the feet of the amiable and devoted Madame d'Armagnac, and filially express his gratitude for all that she had done and suffered for him and his unfortunate, but noble mother. "She was, indeed," said the Countess, "a noble being,—charitable, humane, and benevolent; a stern condemner of her own faults, a mild observer of those of others." Madame then related the frequent conversations that had occurred upon the subject of her son's weal, and promised to accompany him that night to the grave of her beloved mistress. It was in a vault, to which there was an entrance from the convent garden. At the appointed hour Reginald arrived at the castle, attended only by Lucius, and both muffled in black

mantles: the Countess and her attendant joined them, and they proceeded slowly to the convent, and through the garden. Two aged nuns were awaiting their arrival, attended by boys with torches; and, as the gates were thrown back upon their rusty hinges, the sorrowful mourners entered.

Reginald was absorbed in grief: he threw himself upon the coffin of his mother, and remained in prayer for the greater part of an hour. Reviving from his state of sorrow and agitation, the Countess persuaded him to retire, and led him to the open door of the vault. Overcome by his feelings, Reginald reclined against the gothic column which supported the richly-carved architrave. At this moment a figure moved forward, and Reginald saw the glitter of a sword-blade, almost at the same moment that he felt a severe blow: the weapon was entangled with his mantle; and before the assassin could extricate his arm, Lucius, disentangling himself from his cloak, had sprung forward, and buried the stiletto in the heart of the assailant, who fell to speak no more. The blow was Italian—sure as severe: the page was seized for committing murder

in the garden of the monastery, and carried before the abbot. The abbot was old and cautious. Lucius was a foreigner; a strange knight had been attacked: it was a case of great doubt. Lucius acknowledged that she was a woman, and the monks were ordered instantly to convey the murderess to the nunnery of St Agnes,—the abbot stating to the lady abbess the sex of the offender as the cause. When the lady abbess was assured by the Countess that Lucius was an attendant of the King of England, whose livery and badge she wore, she was released; and the monks and nuns were left to make arrangements for the burial of the deceased.

So anxious was Reginald to screen his defender from ecclesiastical power, that he neither thought of the wound he had received, nor of the person who had inflicted it. Returned to his quarters, he said, "Lucius, we will not mention this to our attendants: it may have an evil influence on their minds. When you were wounded, I attended you: your modesty must not now be shocked in attending me." Lucius had too strong a nerve in

his or her composition, to mind the sight of blood: the wound was skilfully dressed and bandaged, and Lucius watched while the exhausted knight slept.

Reginald was detained some days at the château before a litter could be prepared to carry him to Paris. "Here is a paper, my son," said Madame d'Armagnac, "which I believe to be the Lady Jeanne's last testament; and here are some chests, enclosing, as I think, her jewels: I believe there is also a box which contains her private papers. With you I know they will be safe."

"While life remains!" answered De Vavasour, "here is a paper, Madame, in which I have endeavoured to fulfil the dying request of my mother; and while Reginald breathes, I pray you consider him as your son." The Countess embraced him, and they parted. On arriving at Paris, Reginald wrote to Robert d'Artois, who instantly visited him; and the young knight, after relating the cause of his detention, mentioned the will, and begged him to be present at the opening. The expenditure of the Lady Jeanne had been so trifling, that she was enabled to give a large endow-

ment to the monastery which she had chosen for her place of burial, as well as to the convent of St. Agnes. The residue of her fortune was bequeathed to Reginald de Vavasour; and to him also were the jewels given: it was impossible that the money could be obtained without the signature of the King, and Robert d'Artois promised forthwith to demand an audience upon the subject. When Philippe learnt that Reginald was in Paris, he said:—"Then he shall directly set out for Avignon: we have something of consequence to transact relative to the church; and there is none so fit as Reginald to conduct it, since he has no scruples upon controversial points, and is well esteemed by his Holiness."

Robert d'Artois acquainted Reginald with the King's pleasure, and delivered an order for our hero to present himself on the following morning at court.

"I am not able to appear," said Reginald, "nor have I sufficient attendants to undertake so fatiguing a journey." He wrote to the King by Robert

d'Artois. Philippe was very gracious, gave an order on the treasury for the Lady Jeanne's effects, and directed that every care should be taken of Reginald on the journey. "Our private records," remarked the King, "tell us that Sir Reginald has been successful in every thing he has undertaken, which shows that he is born under a presiding angel of good; and it becomes kings to employ such minds as heaven smiles upon. When he returns from Avignon, he shall proceed in great splendor to England: meanwhile, privacy will best suit our wishes."

CHAP. XXXIX.

A LETTER.

Reginald felt relieved from the embarrassment in which he had been placed, by the arrival of Lorenzo and Hawkwood, who, growing impatient at the non-appearance of the Prince, had set out for Roye, and traced him to Paris. On consideration, Reginald was convinced of the propriety of parting from his protectress, by whom he determined to send a despatch to the Queen Philippa Under the escort of Hawkwood, of whose honor and fidelity he had received so many proofs, he was certain his page would be secure. "You must now, Alathæa," said he, "submit to Ethelred as his loyal wife. When the Countess Matilde learns that it was by orders of her royal relative you followed my footsteps, and also hears the services you have rendered me, she will cease to harass her

mind with suspicions, and leave surmises to chance."

While Lucius was travelling sorrowfully towards England, Reginald made a slow journey to Vienne. The Primate welcomed his young friend with an affectionate greeting, adding,—"Your suit at the court of England thrives well, I hope?"

"I trust, well; but this mission to Avignon is as unfortunate as unforeseen."

"We must, my son, to the Maison de Roussigné, for there you will be a most welcome guest: my poor Rosalie begins to pine; and will soon, I fear, fall a sacrifice to the neglect of her husband."

At the Maison all was sun-shine on the appearance of the general favorite, and all determined to accompany Reginald to Roussillon. Aurélie felt as if she had indeed a sister, when she heard the affectionate expressions of Matilde; and Agenor, with the warmth of a brother and a friend, declared that the only wish he had on earth would be accomplished in the projected and expected union.

These joys were soon damped by the receipt of a letter from Matilde: but we will first place our

hero in Avignon, surrounded by those friends who loved him and knew his value, and with whom he enjoyed the pleasure of society, while occupied with the execution of King Philippe's projects.

Aurélie did not make known to her husband the contents of the following:—"I am too much pained at heart to write at any length to my dearest sister: I too much require condolence. I have received anonymous information that the Prince of —— is at Paris, with the Roman beauty in his suite. I have repeatedly visited the Saxon astrologer, but have not been admitted. Every thing seems to unite in proving the person I love a traitor to his mistress; but I will not condemn without substantial proof. If, after vowing attachment to me, he has wilfully and wantonly mocked my love, and trifled with my regard,—I will abandon all thoughts of him, and prefer a convent to the fulfilment of expectations encouraged by your unfortunate sister,

"MATILDE."

"Indeed, my sister," said Aurélie, "you are very unfortunate, if you listen to the tell-tales of

an anonymous scribbler. Who can this Roman beauty be, of whom she speaks? I never heard of any preference but for Cecile, and she is fixed at Avignon, as gay and as careless as if Reginald had never loved or lived. Perhaps, however, she is pleased at hearing the tidings of his expected greatness. Even if she does not marry the Spanish Prince, yet, as Vicomtesse de Turenne, her possessions and expectations are considerable, and I believe her avarice and ambition to be unbounded. I will write to my sister."—And she wrote as follows:—

"To the Countess Matilde d'Hainault.

"Willing as I am, my sweet Matilde, to unite in sympathy of feeling with the sister of my loved Agenor, yet I cannot refrain from using every argument in my power to change her opinions and belief. Your lover leaves you, having avowed his preference; yet, on the anonymous information of some enemy to honor and Reginald, you believe he is at Paris in company with a celebrated Roman beauty. Who she is, I know not; who he is, I

know. Reginald is not the man to profess what he does not feel. Before he saw you, my sister! he became entrammelled in a love affair; but, entre nous, I, who know the whole story, can acquit your knight of all blame, unless you would have him imitate the saintly conduct of the good Joseph:—besides, the inamorata was not the wife of his friend and protector. I never heard of any other liaison: indeed, generally speaking, I consider Reginald as paying little regard to female charms, and think it requires such beauty as yours to make a lasting impression. Having made that impression, trust me it will not easily be effaced. I have had frequent conversations with him on the subjects of love and marriage: he is high in hope, though still suffering from a wound in his side. He complains of the cruelty of the King in sending him to Avignon, instead of London: this shows where his *heart* is. He has received a bequest from his mother, of certain chests, containing things rare and precious: I know their destiny: I know his thoughts: I know his companions. There is nothing to alarm the most scrupulous or the most

jealous of mistresses: confide in your own charms, my sweet sister! and in the honor of your lover. While your heart is so interested, I will not fatigue you with nursery tales; and in the sameness of our happy rural life we have none others to relate. Our society was agreeably increased by the arrival of the Prince de Rougemont, and the Roussigné family: but they have left us to our still chambers, where certainly Momus does not keep his court. Marry Reginald, and come and live with us; and we will make a bower for you, and a court of tourney for your husband. The woods will afford sport for the men, and our feminine endeavours shall make the amusements within doors keep pace with those of exercise. We will draw around us all the agreeable and well-informed of both sexes; and Roussillon shall be a fairy palace amidst hanging gardens. Write to your sister in a happier tone, and believe her devoted to your welfare.

"AURELIE."

"P.S. I wish Pegasus could lend his wings, or act letter-carrier; so that this billet could fly to

you, and fly back, with a sweet, dear, amiable, charming, encouraging response. Lay my counsel near your heart, sweet sister!"

CHAP. XL.

CONCILIATION.

LEAVING the correspondence to work its gradual way, (which way however Aurélie endeavoured to hasten by sending her letter by a special messenger,) we shall follow Reginald. This was the first time he had ever visited Avignon with a heavy heart. He had not sufficient reliance on himself to be certain that, if Cecile chose to remember former days, he had self-command sufficient to forget them. The only chance he had of safety was by avoiding temptation; and as his business was urgent, and the answer of the Pope must be given forthwith, the Prince expected to be fully occupied during his intended very short visit. Lorenzo wished to make himself agreeable to the

Countess de l'Isle; but, though he devoted his time and attentions, he did not make any impression.

Petrarch still raved and wrote of Laura, while not occupied either with the Pope, the Cardinal, or Reginald: Laura smiled or frowned, looked cross or kind, as the humour suited. Cecile was the gayest of the gay, and the most agreeable of the agreeable: she made up her mind on one subject, and then turned her thoughts to another. She corresponded constantly with the Bishop of Arras; and only in her first letter since our hero's arrival said any thing alluding to his personal appearance.—" Heavens, my dear Frère Pierre, what a man you have sent us! What he can do in diplomacy the skies may tell, not I; but if he had so looked when he first entered Avignon, he would never have triumphed over the proud heart of —— a lady that shall be nameless. Some people say he is in love. Poor man! I pity him. If English love has this effect, Lord defend me from catching the disease! Instead of the open, daring, audacious, careless conqueror, he comes now as the dejected, dispirited, dull victim of the

tender passion;—tender nonsense! I see he is dying to leave us. Order the knight of the woful countenance away; for really he has cast a gloom over our voluptuous city, and half our Countesses have, pro tempore, turned into prudes: Madame Laura is almost gallant in comparison with them. Nevertheless, if I were so inclined, I think I could transform this transformed to his original ——, No, I must *not* think it! Yet something tells me he is afraid of my charms, and of his love-sick damsel's hearing of them. Send him away, poor man! and let him seek what he calls happiness elsewhere. We have nothing amusing going on. Lorenzo is making love to Eleonore; but it will not do: another is seated there too firmly for a wild, wandering knight to dislodge. My father, worthy man! still talks of treaties and Tacitus,—entertainments and Epicurus,—papal bulls and philosophical projects. Come, and enliven us with your wit; and, if you bring a flight of handsome cavaliers in your train, the ladies of Avignon will be much obliged to you for the change; as they are heartily sick of their old Cupidons. Now, *you*

know, Frère Pierre! a man *may* be valued for good cause and reason; but your Cupidon, like your butterfly, must be gay, brilliant, and lovely in colour: he must not retrace his course, and become a grub. We are all here vraiment ennuyés; —so come, and be well received by ——C. DE C.'

While Mademoiselle thus gave one account of our hero, he himself gave another, though in briefer phrase. His letter was addressed to Robert d'Artois.

"I will not fatigue your Excellency with minute details; nor would it be expedient to trust matters of moment in a written communication. The Pope took some offence at my pressing for an answer; but I remained firm, and received one, which I fear must satisfy the King. I cannot say, my friend and protector, that I have done all I could wish; but I have done all that I could effect. Writing is not a point wherein I pretend to excel: pardon me, therefore, if I make this letter brief.—Reginald de Montserrent."

Having concluded his despatch, Reginald desired the presence of the Count de Cominges. "You are aware, sir," said he, "that I have remained

here sixteen days in expectation of a favorable answer?"

"Yes," said de Cominges calmly, "and Hannibal waited as many years in Italy to hear of Rome's surrender. I suppose your Excellency has made the time pass lightly by visiting that saucy young woman, my daughter, who is as imperious as she is learned!"

"No, Count! I have given my time to the business in which I have been employed; and which being now concluded, to-morrow I depart. You still remain in my place. The health of the Pope is declining: he is a kind old man, with whom harsh measures should not be used. Perhaps I have been too haughty. I am sorry—I regret; but, Count! a King's orders are peremptory."

"Yes, Prince! and a Pope, at Avignon, almost a slave. The head of the church should purchase this territory;—should fortify this town;—should assemble the most learned men and most experienced warriors. The Pope should have a Cicero

as his senator, and a Scipio as his general:—such men are living."

Reginald turned carelessly away from the persecution he was likely to undergo; but the orator, having once commenced, was not likely to be easily silenced. "You, Prince, have recommended conciliatory measures:—have you used them towards my daughter? Have you not acknowledged that you have shunned her presence? In revenge, she will throw herself entirely under the guidance of the Bishop. Now, my plan is to conciliate all parties. My son is dead, and Cecile inherits her mother's fortune and title:—I cannot help his dying, or her inheriting; but I can turn the event to advantage. In the first place, I conciliate my daughter by leaving her follies unnoticed, and praising her talents;—then I conciliate the Pope, by promising that the talents of my daughter shall be employed in his service;—and lastly, if it is necessary, I can conciliate the Bishop."

"No more, at present, my good conciliator-

general! Make my best excuses to your fair daughter;—say that I wish her, married or unmarried, all the happiness which beauty and talent deserve to have showered on them; and that I depart in haste, having fulfilled my mission." Reginald was anxious to bring this interview to a close, for he entertained a suspicion that this grand peace-maker had an inclination to reconcile him to his daughter;—guessing, by some inuendos of the worthy sophist, that he was aware there had been a decline in the connexion subsisting between them; and imagining that so prudent a calculator would like the two strings he had to his bow to draw together. Lorenzo arrived to announce that every thing was prepared for departure. The Count de Cominges was yet in the room. "I have left, Count, on the writing-table," observed Reginald, "some trifling memorials of my regard, which no one but a scholar would value: accept them, for my sake; and remember this,—if you want a favor granted, apply to me; for Reginald of Montserrent will always remember what he owes to his friends in Avignon."

The early hour at which they departed prevented any conflux of spectators when Reginald descended to the court-yard. At this moment a page, breathless with haste, rushed in and presented a billet. The signet was one well-known. "It must be answered directly," exclaimed the page. The Prince hesitated a moment, placed the billet in his left glove, and galloped from the spot, where the frightened page stood transfixed. He had been ordered not to return without an answer, at the peril of his life. He determined to seek out some one who could write, and relieve himself at least from the penalty which the Prince's abrupt departure had affixed on his head. We cannot now follow the page, and his manœuvres to obtain a manuscript suitable to a knight; but we can well imagine the transition from grief to rage, and from rage to laughter, which occurred in a certain bosom, when its fair owner found that, notwithstanding her condescension, her knight had galloped off, and left behind him such an epistle. "Moon of perfection!"—"idol of ecstasy!"—"star of sublimity!"—as appellatives; and "depths of dark-

ness and despair," "torrents of fire," and "famine wasting like the sands of the sea," &c. as similes. Cecile said, "stuff!" — and composed herself to sleep.

CHAP. XLI.

RECONCILIATION.

THE Countess de Roussillon received Reginald in the grand hall. There was an evident constraint in her manner, which our young and impatient knight could neither understand nor endure. "What is the matter, Aurélie?" said he. "This is not the manner in which we met when my services were needed: now, perhaps, yours are, and you take the haughty tone of superiority!"

"No, Prince Reginald!"

"I was Reginald de Vavasour when I bore the lovely Aurélie in my arms, and saved for Agenor a blooming wife.—But that is boasting. Tell me, Aurélie, how have I offended you?"

"Not me, but a whisper tells me you have offended one to whom I am nearly allied."

"If you allude to Avignon, I can swear that I have not courted the favors of one who is most charming: nay more, ——"

"I wish to hear no secrets, Prince! My letters touch not upon Avignon."

"Before you proceed, hear my confession." The conversation continued until Agenor entered. "There," said he, "is the letter of my irritated, pride-offended sister."

"You will pardon me, Agenor," said De Vavasour, "for retiring. I came here full of joy; I shall, I fear, leave you full of sorrow; but while I live, towards you both my affection will be the same. Once, indeed, I did hope,—but my hopes were like atoms in the rainbow; and with the prismatic beauties of the vision, they too have disappeared." The Prince remained secluded in his apartment during the following day, on the evening of which a special messenger arrived from England, with letters from Matilde to Aurélie,

and with one also for Reginald. Aurélie herself bore it to her friend, and, announced by a page, entered the apartment of the Prince.

"My friend! my preserver! my brother!" cried she, "the Queen has explained; Lucius, the saviour of your life, has returned; every thing is forgiven and forgotten:—all is joy and sun-shine. —I will now leave you to the perusal of this;"—handing the letter of Matilde, which her lover rapturously kissed. It ran as follows:—"With a trembling hand and a beating heart, I address you, who would not confide in me. My motive is, that I have wronged you: I have accused you of treachery to —— I was going to say, the avowed, the acknowledged mistress of your heart.—Let it be said! but let it not be believed that Reginald could be a traitor. My beloved sister has argued against such a supposition, — has denied the reality of that which appeared to exist,—because she believed, as I do now, in the fixed attachment of one whom all respect and admire, — whom all love. Return to England, receive all the atonement

I can offer, and place your confidence in the now unalterable affection of MATILDE."

Reginald flew to the writing-table; his soul was impatient to fly to the haven of the pure bosom of Matilde, and all other joys were forgotten. Paper after paper was torn:—we have said our knight did not possess the eloquence du billet. Aurélie and Agenor entered. They both embraced him, after reading the letter of their sister. "We country residents, Reginald!" said Agenor, "think all good news must be hailed by a feast. You have done penance by fasting yester-evening and to-day. Delay no longer to partake of the goods Providence bestows.— Let us escort you."

"My dress is unsuited," replied our knight.

"We do not, here, regard the ceremonies of dress: we saw you were depressed—we see you are now elevated. The gaudy robe does not display the character of the man. You are dearer to mein this habit than in the most gorgeous apparel; for it reminds me of your past grief. Come, my

brother! this happy reconciliation unites us all in one family, and the prayers and wishes of my Aurélie will be gratified."

A flourish of trumpets made Agenor hasten to the court-yard, and Aurélie was left alone with Reginald. The unaffected warmth of regard, delight, and affection, expressed by the former brought tears of gratitude into the eyes of the latter; and with difficulty the Prince sufficiently mastered his feelings so as to hand his beautiful friend to the banqueting-hall. As they entered, the loud tones of Count Rodolphe's voice struck their ears.

"By the fierce tusked boar," shouted he, "a brave repast! Son Agenor, you could not have done better, had you known the news I bear; but let us both do honor to the supper, and then hear what I have to communicate." When Count Rodolphe had satisfied his appetite, he filled a bumper: "This is to the health of my future son-in-law, and my daughter, his intended bride: moreover, I am commanded, Prince Primate, to solicit your presence, and to invite my son and his wife. These are the instructions of Edward and Philippa."

"I suppose, Count Rodolphe," said Lorenzo, "I must remain at home, and, like a dutiful son, guard my mother and nurse the children!"

"You need not be alarmed: your mother is included, with your sister Rosalie, so you will have to nurse the children alone."

"By St. Maurice, I will do no such thing: I will carry off by force that piece of calm content, Eleonore de l'Isle, and retire to that cheerful habitation, the Château de Lunheim: there we will wander together, and moan, ay, and groan; she at my folly, and I at hers."

"Lorenzo," observed our hero, "you belong to my suite as ambassador, and require no invitation."

"But you will allow him to remain, Prince," rejoined Aurélie, "if he prefers the children, or the wilds of Bohemia?"

"Thanks, thanks, fair hostess!" said Lorenzo, "but I am not quite so great a fool. Your children may be delightful darlings—I am sure they are—and hope to be doubly assured by seeing them. Eleonore is a pretty woman; is rich, and would make a good wife:—but it is a long way to Bohemia;

and, after all, a woman carried off by force is a very dull companion, and very ill suited to render a crazy, tumbling-down ruin, a comfortable residence. No, let us be happy, and, together, visit merry England. I envy no man his lot: I endeavour to bear my own, though sometimes I find it dull enough: — but beware of seriousness, Lorenzo! 'Tis true, I once did gaze upon an angel, and she flitted from my sight. Oh that the recollection of her charms had steeled my heart against the blandishments of sinning mortals! I might then have been worthy of this happy circle."

Lorenzo, for the first time in his life, displayed feeling; and, in a gay, rough soldier, it appeared the stronger from its rarity. The Countess de Roussigné walked with him to another part of the hall, while the Prince de Rougemont conversed with and complimented Reginald on the brilliant prospects before him. "Be assured, my friend," said he, "you will receive at the hands of your gracious relative the honors and estates of your father."

"I wear a gift of the King's, which belonged to the Earl of Ulleswater; and I treasure up in my mind the words which accompanied that valuable gift: — as the husband of Queen Philippa's relative, I may claim the inheritance of my father."

CHAP. XLII.

BRIDAL PRESENTS.

THE cortèges of the Prince Primate and the ambassador attracted the attention of the inhabitants of the provinces through which they passed. At Paris, Pierre Roger, now Archbishop of Sens, was the first person to offer his gift for the bride: King Philippe, at his reception of Reginald, also presented a rich matrimonial present; and the apartment of our hero was crowded with various decorations for the young Countess. These were consigned, with the jewels of the Lady Jeanne, to the care of Hawkwood and the Ger-

man guard. The travellers reached the white cliffs of Albion in safety. Hobson was stationed at Dover with a proper retinue of horses and attendants. The Primate visited the Castle of Dover, and discussed whether the Pharos was built by Julius or Claudius Cæsar. He viewed with delight the architectural ornaments of the cathedral of Canterbury; and Reginald gave a sketch of the history of this venerable building, commencing at the foundation of the archbishopric by Ethelred, king of Kent, in 568.

On entering the city of Westminster, the Gothic beauty of the Abbey attracted the attention of the Primate. "This building," said De Vavasour, "has not, like that of Canterbury, any record of barbarity to draw forth our observations on kings and priests. The church and abbey of St. Peter were founded by Sebert, king of the West Saxons, in 611, fifteen years after Friar Austin was sent over by Pope Gregory. That Hall was built by William the Second, and this palace by Edward the Confessor. In all probability the King is enjoying his retirement at Windsor; for

he is of as domestic a nature as your Highness, and there is no more ceremony at the court of Queen Philippa than there is at the Maison de Roussigné. But we must move on, or we shall be surrounded by my worthy acquaintances, the people. Englishmen are not always in the humour to be civil to Frenchmen, especially when they know there is a dispute between the king of the foreigners and their own."

The number of the party,—led horses, mules, and attendants,—had collected a crowd, and curiosity was afloat to learn the rank of the visitors, of which information was given by Hobson, and the multitude shouted joyously. Reginald took advantage of this; and, in order to strengthen the popularity so suddenly acquired, ordered money to be scattered among the surrounding cheerers,—a well-known encouragement to popular applause.

The day's journey had been short: Reginald therefore ordered Hawkwood to move forward with the cases destined for Matilde. "As soon as the comfort of my friends is attended to," added he, "I shall set off." It is not surprising that,

with the natural impetuosity of youth, Reginald was equally eager to embrace his mistress, and to lay such treasures at her feet. Lorenzo undertook to escort the ladies to the goldsmiths' quarter, where they wished to purchase additional bridal presents, and Rodolphe and Agenor accompanied them with well-filled purses. As they passed from the palace by a private door to the water-side, Lorenzo was saluted by a handsome youth, and some signs passed between them. "Have you any curiosity, ladies," said the former, "to consult the wise woman, who has gained great celebrity in this city? This is at present an idle hour with her, and the shops will not be opened yet with the assortment of rich articles for the nobility. I have the honor of some intimacy with the Donna." The ladies answered in the affirmative, the handsome youth disappeared, and the boatmen plied their oars. "The wise woman," pursued Lorenzo, "receives her visitors like a princess, and her manners are of a high cast,—though her air is perhaps haughty: as for her acquirements, let them speak for themselves. Here

is her house." The boat passed under an archway into a species of grotto, lighted with some dimly-burning lamps: Lorenzo gave the signal, and a door slowly opened. He led the way to an apartment filled with every species of costly furniture and rich ornaments. A throne was placed behind a balustrade of gilded workmanship, and all the appendages of astrology were regularly arranged on either side. The table in front was covered with illuminated sheets of vellum. The wise woman taking her seat, said,—"Lorenzo de Lunheim! what is your pleasure?"

"Some friends of mine," replied he, "wish to see the fountain of wisdom."

The wise woman regarded her visitors, and, turning to the ladies, said, "You are welcome to the capital of England: the King eagerly expects you;—but where is the Prince, your conductor and friend? His star has a dangerous aspect."

"He has left us on business of importance," answered Lorenzo.

"Yes, to throw himself at the feet of his expecting bride; and you, ladies, are now intent

upon procuring fresh gifts to deck the regalem thalamum. Look around you: here is food for your desires."

"May we choose, Lorenzo, from these lovely ornaments?" asked one of the ladies.

"Yes," replied he; "the wise woman always speaks to the point."

"Yes, Countess," echoed the female astrologer, "take what you will;—nor will it be necessary to cut down your forests to pay for these baubles. How fare your children?"

"Thank you, Donna! well."

"May they prove a blessing to you!" Then in a low voice she said to Angelina, "You, too, are destined to give an heir to an ancient family; and you," in the same tone to Rosalie, "to be a widow." The ladies selected various articles: meanwhile Lorenzo conversed with the wise woman.

"You are more en bon point than usual: is it the London air that agrees with you?"

"Do not be childish, Lorenzo! attend your mother, and tell the ladies, if they choose to offer

any thing in return for what they take,—there is my treasury."

"We need not visit the goldsmiths' quarter," remarked Aurélie; "for we are well supplied with rarities, and hope the handsome Donna will think us sufficiently liberal. We have given all we have; but if that does not satisfy her, we will send you, Lorenzo, with further donations."

CHAP. XLIII.

THE SKIRMISH.

Reginald found it necessary to give both horses and mules some provender at a small village on the edge of a wild heath which lay mid-distance between the capital and Windsor. The impatient lover could not brook delay; and, having procured a fresh horse, was about to proceed alone, when an ugly country lad pulled his coat, and made a sign to follow him into the hostelry. The boy put his finger on his mouth, and, in a dexterous manner, placed some tablets in Reginald's hand. There were three. The first showed a tournament, and a fallen knight waving something bloody over his head, while another stood near, leaning on a blood-covered sword. The second displayed a garden; a Gothic arch; a knight wrapped in a cloak, from which the handle of a sword was visible; and a man wounded by the

dagger of a youth. The third showed a wild heath, with a group of horsemen assembled under some large fir-trees; and in the distance persons on horseback, and mules heavily laden.

The bearer had disappeared, but Reginald comprehended the meaning of the tablets, and determined to await the signal for the convoy to move. As they rode slowly along, the Prince was musing on past perils, and thinking of approaching happiness, when his reveries were broken in upon by Hawkwood, who cried,—"There are foes abroad. Look at that group beneath the trees, and mark those videttes on the right and left."

"Hawkwood," replied his master, "take you charge of the rear, and strengthen the flanks: depend on it, they think we have something worth defending."

"Those are leaders with red tufts;—well, we will see who has the best right to the property."

Reginald exchanged his hunting sword for a heavy double-edged weapon. "Now!" exclaimed he, "we will try their metal. You have seen too many hard-fought fields to mind a few scratches

with banditti. Each man shall receive ten golden pieces, as a reward for this extra work."

Inspired by such welcome promise, the Germans coolly prepared for action, and unslung their cross-bows. The assailants galloped up, and were received with a shower of arrows, which killed and wounded many of the men and horses: the dismounted rushed towards the baggage; but were cut down by Hawkwood and his guards posted around. The leader attacked Reginald, and wielded his sword with the skill of a master in the arts of offence and defence. The German horses began to show the ill effects of a long march; and the leader of the banditti pointed to our hero, and ordered his men to carry him off, dead or alive. At this moment, the vigour-inspiring tones of approaching trumpets roused the defendants to fresh exertion. The leader's horse fell; but he evaded the blow aimed at him, and plunged his sword into the breast of the animal on which Reginald was mounted, and the poor beast rolled on the ground. Hawkwood sprang before his fallen chief: the leader of the assailants leaped on

another horse, and was preparing to renew the battle, when succour arrived; and, with many bitter execrations, he galloped from the ground of contest. Reginald was released from the weight of the wounded animal, and was accosted by the captain of the guard now arrived.

"Whom may I have the honor of addressing?" said the officer.

"The King calls me Reginald de Vavasour."

"I am sent to obey your orders. The King received a report of your danger; and I find report, in this instance, no liar."

"My people are rather fatigued by travelling from Paris; will you therefore, sir, take charge of this baggage for the Countess Matilde? You have behaved well, soldiers! and shall have your promised reward: your captain will lead you back to the village where we halted: fix a party here to guard the wounded; and let every effort be made to save this poor horse."

Reginald accompanied the guard across the heath, and then, with a few followers, galloped on, impatient to throw himself at the feet of the maiden

for whom he felt a fervent and increasing passion.

"What a tedious distance!" cried the Prince: "we shall never arrive there. This horse is not worth a gold piece." These, and a thousand other observations, were uttered in vain; but ten miles are soon passed in a gallop, and Reginald found himself in the court-yard of Windsor Castle.

Without noticing the salute of the soldiers and knights assembled, he rushed past them; but, recollecting himself, turned round, returned their salutations, and allowed the page of the Countess, who was in waiting, to precede him to the apartments of the Baronne d'Arnheim.

CHAP. XLIV.

THE JEWELS.

PATIENCE announced to the Baronne the arrival of the expected visitor, and in a few moments the Prince received her blessing. Matilde entered; and Reginald seized her in his arms, and imprinted a burning kiss on the lips of his blushing mistress. "For shame!" said she, "for shame!—there are witnesses of your rudeness, and of my weakness in submitting to it."

"Only La Baronne and Patience," whispered the knight: "the former you need not dread, and the latter knows her place well enough not to see."

Matilde regarded her lover, and said,—"Heavens, you have blood upon your clothes!"

"Not my own, my love! perhaps it is that of my poor horse, who lies on the heath wounded by the cowardly leader of forty or fifty persons,

who took a fancy to some cases belonging to a certain lovely lady; but, fortunately, I received a hint of their kind intentions,—as witness these tablets."

"From whom did you receive them? Let me know, that I may reward him a hundred-fold. Tell me, who was your guardian-angel?"

"A very ugly one, I assure you; but his kindness makes him appear a beauty in my eyes."

"These tablets must have been sent by Alathæa: but you are not wounded?"

"Only here, and deeply!"—(laying his hand on his heart.)

"That wound is not dangerous, my ——"

"Finish the sentence, Matilde, with—love!"

The time passed quickly away in such conversation as the delighted pair indulged themselves with; for it was indulgence, and they had been left alone. Patience now broke in upon their happiness; but her news was such as to delight both parties. "The cavalry," said she, "are arrived with the baggage." The cases were conveyed into

an adjoining chamber, but Reginald would allow no person but himself to touch the treasure which they contained. The outward bulwarks being destroyed, the precious cases of matted gold-work were carefully unlocked, and the brilliant appearance within dazzled the eyes of the admiring beauty. Beauties will admire fine things, although beauty itself needs no decoration. Matilde could not resist the overpowering grandeur of diamonds, emeralds, rubies, topazes, and sapphires, combined with the splendor and refinement of French taste.

There was amongst these splendid ornaments one neglected collar, or, as we call it now, necklace, of turquoises: by disuse, the stones had lost their colour, but Matilde admired them even in their decay, and to the necklace were attached these words:—"My last ball, A.D. ——:" it was the year of Reginald's birth. He grew pale, and said, "Matilde, we must not touch the remaining case until your sister arrives: half the pleasure of giving consists in seeing the manner in

which the gift is first viewed. Now I will to my toilette."

"Remember, it is to your toilette, and not to your horse, that you go, sir knight!" Reginald saluted the fair detainer, and promised obedience. On the retreat of the Prince, Patience entered, and the jewels and ornaments were arranged in good order, and carried in rotation by the damsels to the private apartment of the Baroness.

"They are, my child," said that lady, "of great value, and of great beauty."

"However great their intrinsic value may be," replied Matilde, "they are ten times more precious to me from having been worn by the unfortunate mother of my destined lord."

"I knew the Countess d'Armagnac in my youth," rejoined the Baronne; "but our friendship was interrupted by a family quarrel, which arose from her supposed infidelity to her husband."

"But the Countess, who is still living, is not the mother of my future spouse: Reginald knows her, but he never knew his real parent. She was

of high rank;—no matter, aunt!—we will not talk of rank or parentage; but Reginald is nobly descended."

CHAP. XLV.

POSSIBLE EVENTS.

When the Primate, with the other travellers, reached the village near the heath, they found Hawkwood ready to escort them. As they approached the position in which the wounded men were placed, Lorenzo gave notice of the approach of a numerous body of horsemen. "Place the women in the centre, and form a square round them," cried Rodolphe: "I do not like these gentry; and by my spurs, we shall have sharp work of it."

"We are safe," cried Aurélie: "that is De Vavasour's plume." Reginald had scoured the country round, and expected to reach the village

before his friends could travel so far; but the general anxiety to see Matilde had made them early risers. As they rode towards the castle of Windsor, a numerous cortège of nobles and attendants issued from its walls: among them was Earl Mortimer. He regarded Rodolphe with a stern aspect, but saluted the rest with civility, and said, "The King expects you, Sir Reginald!"

Edward and Philippa received their visitors in the hall of state. When the ceremony of presentation was over, the Queen said, "My cousin prefers to meet her relatives in her private apartment: Sir Reginald will conduct you thither." The delight of the meeting repaid Aurélie for grief at the prolonged separation from one whom she was so prepared to love. The hours passed swiftly by, and no one was ready to obey the summons to the banquet-hall. Reginald hastened to the Queen to apologise for their unavoidable absence; but no excuses would be taken. "The ladies," exclaimed Edward, "need not be ashamed to be seen in their riding apparel: we insist on their presence."

"The orders of a King must be obeyed."

"The wishes of a friend should be complied with."

Reginald returned to conduct his party. Rosalie regarded Queen Isabel: Aurélie could only look from Philippa to Matilde, and from Matilde to Philippa.

"We considered, Sir Reginald!" said the monarch, "that you were lost, until we heard of your arrival at Avignon. Good fortune seems to attend you every where. Under what planet were you born?"

"I must consult an astrologer, sire, before I answer."

"Well, you have one at your command, and the Queen Dowager says two; for she declares that your page also understands the stars."

"That is a tender point, sire! the less that certain persons are reminded of it, the better for harmony and happiness."

This observation, though made in a low tone, did not escape the notice of the only person who should not have heard it. Wishing to change the train of thought, Edward said, "Your Highness,

Prince Primate, was most fortunate in your selection of a leader, and King Philippe in that of an ambassador. My friend Reginald seems as expert a manager of the mind of a pope, as of the spear of a soldier."

"Or the heart of a woman," whispered Matilde.

"I would," continued the King to the Primate in a low tone, "give Philippe of France a score of some of my barons for that single peer."

"The Earl, his father, sire, was my friend. England never possessed a braver or more captivating youth. You have more claim than Philippe to the devoirs of Reginald de Vavasour."

"We will speak of this in private. Countess Aurélie, you seem fatigued with your journey."

"With your leave, Lord Edward, we will retire," said the Queen.

"Fie, Philippa! if you lead, we follow. In the camp alone do knights direct, and in the council kings decide:—but in the palace female beauty reigns; and we, the humble worshippers of

such brilliant stars, gaze with rapture, and obey with zeal."

"Very gallant, truly, my Lord Edward!" returned his spouse: "Sir Reginald could not have spoken better to our fair cousin. Count Rodolphe seems to think that, though women have their charms, the social board has some claim to consideration. We ladies, however, may retire, as the King permits." Edward rose at the same time, and his example was followed by the Primate, Agenor, and Reginald. "Courtship," said Rodolphe to Lorenzo, "and a bad example, have changed our Young Lion. I am sure women grow tired to death of the love-sick swains who are always dangling at their heels, like a puppy-dog chasing its mother. Well, Lorenzo, we can have half an hour's chat over this golden jug. What events, think you, will follow this marriage with my daughter?"

"I fear there is not much affection, at a certain court, for a certain knight."

"I think with you; but, in the event of a war,

swords will be wanted; and Philippe had better make sure of two,—those belonging to Robert and De Vavasour. Reginald, in such a case, must defend Flanders for his wife's sake; and I think the Flemings will for once join hand in hand, and, notwithstanding their hatred to royalty, elect him their king."

"For my part, I shall share the fortunes of De Vavasour, if the Primate has no call for my services. I have no tie to France. If ever I have a shilling, it will be in Germany, and the Emperor will take part with Edward. As for the military power of Vienne, it is hourly fading away. I do not think the Dauphin capable of double-dealing, but that Don Cankeros is my aversion. If I were the Primate, I would place Reginald at the head of an army, drive the old villain from St. Colombe; and if the Viennese did not aid me en masse, I would decimate them."

"And so be guilty of civil war and murder,—and at a time when the parent state is about to be involved in peril! You are a mad-cap. De Vava-

sour, even if he were not on the point of marriage, is now too great a leader to embroil himself is such trifling disputes. If Edward and Philippe take the field, the sword of Reginald may assist in turning the scale of victory; but as for conflicts between petty towns and principalities, our friend would now consider them as the combats of infants."

"Do you think he would suffer such a man as the Prince de Rougemont to be trampled upon?"

"No; but it is whispered that he is allied by blood to Isabelle of Dauphiné."

"There certainly is a resemblance:—supposing the Dauphin perishes in the field, and the young Humbert reigns over Dauphiné and the Viennese, Reginald may protect his rights, and rule those turbulent mountaineers. All I say is, whenever the Primate grows tired of fighting for rights from which he derives little advantage, and the legions are dispersed,—I will raise a corps out of the disembodied troops, and take my station under Reginald."

"Do not you intend to marry? An only son is bound in duty to do as his father has done before him, and make the family honors live."

"The name of Fredericksburg is not worth transmitting; and as for Lunheim, if I have a real right to it, (which I much doubt,) I think it a modern honor, not requiring permanency. But I have thought of marriage; Eleonore de l'Isle is the object of my affections; but she is deaf to every thing except the name of Petrarch."

"Women are often fools, and some great fools. Eleonore ranks among the latter. It makes me sick when I hear of such nonsense. 'Love those that love you,' is my motto; and if a handsome woman smiles at me, I am ready to fall at her feet: women ought to feel the same."

"I wish they did, and I should have a good number at mine: but no more of this; we must to the ladies, where your Countship must imitate the King, and act the lover to my good sister."

"Good, Lorenzo, she truly is; but, like the icicle, very cold."

CHAP. XLVI.

THE ROYAL ZONE.

EARLY in the morning, as lovers cannot sleep, Reginald and Matilde met by appointment in the Plaisance. Their horses were ready, and, attended only by her page, they left the castle. "To prove to you," said Matilde, "that I am no longer jealous of your Roman beauty, I propose a visit to our friend at the Saxon cross."

"Name your wishes," he replied: "I shall always be too happy in complying with them."

Near the rising ground which led to the cross they dismounted; and, taking an easy though circuitous path, came in view of the rocks which formed a part of Ethelred's subterraneous palace. At the next turning, the young couple stopped, arm in arm, to view the scene before them. On one side rose the overhanging rock, surmounted by trees and coppice wood, amidst which the an-

cient cross might be perceived: on the other side was a fine view of the forest, the park, and the castle, which, though not to be spoken of in comparison with that superb pile left by Edward to be the admiration of future ages, yet formed a grand and picturesque point in the beautiful landscape.

Ethelred and Alathæa were seated under a rustic bower covered with evergreen plants, over which a magnificent beech, that might have told a tale of many a monarch's day, threw its protecting shade. A table spread with fruits and flowers gave additional ornament to the scene, and the costume of the Saxon and his bride contributed to the general effect. On the grass were reclining two young damsels, whose draperies were of such delicate texture as to display their juvenile forms in true natural beauty.

As the visitors advanced, Alathæa rose to meet them. "We welcome thee hither, illustrious Princess!" exclaimed she, "and here I offer my wedding gift. The Queen, who once wore the mystic pearl, was the donor. It never was intended for my rude form: your waist will bear its pres-

sure. Wear it to-morrow, and be happy." Matilde was half-ashamed to accept so royal a present.

"Our gifts, Alathæa," said Reginald, "must be offered when next we meet. Our visit to-day was accidental; it was the Countess's proposal."

"We are much bounden to her goodness," replied Alathæa; "but Ethelred warned me that she would come, and therefore I was prepared. Aristobulus bestowed this, with these words:—'When you meet a virgin whose rank, whose beauty, and whose virtue render her deserving to be the bride of ——' (Her voice faltered.) No matter for the rest! but you, Princess! are the person destined to wear this zone." As she spoke, Reginald perceived the increased size of the Saxon Queen. Ethelred now took part in the conversation; but he appeared laboring under restraint; and the interview being irksome to all parties, Reginald and Matilde withdrew, and returned in silence to the castle.

Reginald proposed a walk in the Plaisance. "I fear," said he, "your thoughts have recurred to past days, Matilde, and that you condemn me

for actions which appear to you unworthy the man who aspired to be the husband of a virtuous and beautiful Princess."

"I wish," answered Matilde, "I could forget the past: I wish I could think myself the only person you ever truly loved, and I would not care if all the world had loved you. I have not mixed much in society, but yet I have the means of judging of your sex; and I think, if I had not been so cold, you would have acted differently. I am surprised, now that I know your charms of character, how I could refrain from passionately loving you. I have been punished, perhaps too severely; but I will not complain."

"Every tear that drops from you, Matilde, plants a dagger in my heart. Hear me vow that henceforth my whole thoughts shall be devoted to you!" Approaching footsteps made the lovers retire to a more shaded walk.

"I should not like to be surprised with these red eyes," said the young Countess: "I can gain the Queen's private apartments by a winding stair in that tower." Reginald conducted his fair mis-

tress to the door, of which she had the key, and returned slowly to the steps leading to the castle. The voice of Rosalie struck on his ear.

" Do not, I beseech you, tell me of my husband's frailty. His passions are, I fear, too deeply fixed, ever to change; but yet I am his wife, and must submit." Reginald was an unwilling listener, and doubled his pace until he reached the castle.

Isabel was just returned from her ride, attended by Rodolphe. " My followers," said she to De Vavasour, " have a chest of trifles destined for the Countess, who I once hoped would have been my daughter. Well—she must be so; for I must consider you as my son."

" I owe you, Madame," replied Reginald, " more than I can repay: your high rank renders it impossible for so humble an individual as myself ever to have an opportunity of proving my gratitude by deeds instead of words."

" No rank, Reginald, will protect mankind from misfortune: we ourselves have seen, and may again see, the wheel of chance turn round. No change will happen to my son while he has his

sword to defend his rights, and his wife to calm his passions. If I had married such a man, I should not stand, as I now do, on a precipice. But I must chase away thought, and call Count Rodolphe to my aid. Is it possible, Sir Knight," turning to him, "that you can admire those animals in a woman's presence?"

"They are fine—very fine," was the reply of Rodolphe, whose attention had been directed to the steeds: "I am not comparing them with your charms, but they have good points."

The Queen retired, followed by Rodolphe; and Reginald went to visit the Baroness.

CHAP. XLVII.

THE WEDDING BALL.

In the tilting and warlike days of our great Edward, a marriage was of a different character from those of our now (Heaven be praised!) peaceful times; which, however, present one point of resemblance,—viz. that the Castle of Windsor is about to be embellished after the ancient and pure model. It was not formerly thought necessary to whirl a bride down, in a neat yellow chaise with four spanking horses, driven by post-boys with large white cockades, (the emblems of innocence,) to an uncomfortable inn; nor was it imagined agreeable to pass the wedding night in a German waggon or barouche, on the way to Calais: neither was it considered refined, polite, proper, or decorous, to shut up the two pretty pigeons in a borrowed cage, there to coo and admire their beauteous selves, as if married people were neither

to see nor be seen. No! formerly there was feasting and general joy; and though sometimes the god of feast and revelry carried the merriment to an inconvenient extent, still it was a glorious sight to behold friends, relations, and acquaintances united round a hospitable board, and all made happy by one ceremony. The publicity of the act prevented the nobility and gentry of the land from entering into alliances unsuitable to their rank; and the same effect was produced, in a minor ratio, among the lower orders; for even they would not present to an assembled body of companions a person of whose character they were ashamed. Delicacy and modesty are estimable qualities in man; but essentially necessary in woman. Sometimes, indeed, the good people of these isles mistake tinsel for gold:—but no matter as to that now!—to our tale.

In approaching the altar in the Royal Chapel, let us view, as we pass, the countenances of the relatives of the happy pair. Let us remark the beauty and grace of Matilde, led by the royal Edward and her father, and the dignity and noble

ease of Reginald: let us listen to the harmonious voice of the Archbishop of Vienne, while he pronounces distinctly the words, to which, as distinctly, the replies are given. There is no hesitation, no sinking of tone in those words, "honor and obey," so awful to the delicate ears of modern fashionables, who would turn up their honorable noses at the ancient usage of promising "to be bonny and blithe in bed and at board." The swelling tones of the instruments, and the harmonious voices chanting the hymeneal hymn, conclude the ceremony; and the bride, having received the marriage kiss, is honored with a regal salutation. The procession moves to the castle, and the bride retires with her bride-maids to her own apartment.

When Matilde afterwards appeared in the great hall, the music struck up a lively air, and Edward led her down the mazy dance: Philippa gave her hand to Reginald; Aurélie danced with Lorenzo, and Rosalie with a young noble of the court. With her usual good-humour, Aurélie rallied her former lover on his obstinate adherence to a single

life. Their amusement was interrupted by the announcement of the bridal supper. There was no rush for places;—no tearing half a skirt from one gentleman's coat, and the whole of a petticoat from his companion. The Court Chamberlain managed all: the King led the bride; the bridegroom and the Queen followed. Among the persons most delighted was Rosalie de Montleans, who, for the first time, saw such gaiety and splendor, and listened to the flattering whispers of admiration from a young, handsome, and gay courtier. Raymond de Valence was of the school of finished coxcombs, who flutter about like butterflies in the sun, resting for an instant on one pretty flower, and then as instantaneously changing it for another: he had basked in the luxuries of the Parisian court, and studied the most improved mode of conveying to the ears of lovely woman the same kind of tale that flattered, deceived, and led to misery our first parent. Aurélie was unassailable, even if Lorenzo had been more agreeable: she respected herself and her husband Rosalie did not know herself; and had, in his

long absences, almost forgotten her husband. Agenor listened with attention to the bridal chorus, and wished Petrarch were present, to describe in poetry the brilliant scene. While they sung, Reginald, feeling a difficulty of breathing, made a sign for a goblet of water. He took, without regarding the giver, a golden cup presented to him: it was suddenly taken from his hand, and as suddenly the contents were forced down the throat of the cup-bearer. The two persons who had so unceremoniously intruded themselves between the cup and the lip, were Ethelred and Alathæa. The attendant was still in the grasp of the Saxon, and the Roman held the emptied cup. A death-like paleness overspread the countenance of the cup-bearer, while Alathæa whispered,—"It is as I thought; the man must die." Reginald half rose from his seat, as the features of the man became stiffened, and his eyes fixed. Matilde was the only person at table who also viewed the appalling sight, and it overpowered her agitated frame: Reginald bore her to her chamber, tore off the zone, and opened her dress

to give freer circulation. The attention of the King and Philippa had been occupied with the music, and the guilty attendant was removed unnoticed. The Queen and other ladies followed Matilde, and assisted in undressing the now-recovered damsel.

Reginald, on his return to the hall, attributed the accident to the heat of the room. The King drank to the speedy recovery of the bride. Matilde was no favorite of the courtiers; she was too proud, too distant, and too learned for their comprehension: besides, it was notorious that she had refused the Earl of Cornwall in preference of a foreigner; but any toast given by a king will find applauders. Reginald rose from his seat, and all eyes were turned towards him: there was a dignity in his look, a grace in his movements, and a harmony in his clear manly voice, which ensured attention. "Permit me, sire," said he, "in the name of the Countess Matilde, to return her dutiful gratitude to your Highness, and her warm thanks to the noble company for their good wishes. It is not, sire, pos-

sible for me to express the feelings of my heart, which swells almost to an ungovernable pride, when I reflect that Heaven has bestowed on such an unworthy individual so rich a prize as the hand of her who has now been thus honored and applauded."

The King then addressed the assembly: — "Knights and nobles, hear me! I protest against the avowal of my brave friend, when he says he is wholly unworthy of his fair bride: I admire his modesty, while I reject his assertion. I have known him since childhood; I have loved him for his good qualities; and I have admired him for his public actions. He has twice mainly contributed, by his personal valour and skill, to the maintenance of just rights and power, and to the suppression of rebellion in countries in whose fate we ourselves are interested,—Guienne and Flanders: he has been a powerful instrument in upholding the rights of the Father of the church, and aided in planting the holy banner on the citadel of Rome. His good deeds do not end here: his exertions have been great towards the maintenance of ami-

cable intercourse between us and France. But I have said enough to prove him honorable, brave, just, and high-minded; and may Heaven so prosper this union, as it has hitherto favored all the enterprises of Reginald de Vavasour!"

Every one expected an animated reply to so much friendship and condescension;—but no Reginald was present! The company murmured disapprobation, and the tide of favor was on the turn. Rodolphe, Agenor, and Lorenzo, all rose; but, seeing the Primate about to speak, resumed their seats.

"I hope, sire, that neither your Highness, nor this goodly company, will attribute the absence of Sir Reginald to any want of respect: no, sire, it is from the natural modesty of his character, which renders it impossible for my young friend to listen, much less to reply to, such praises from such a source. He could not have replied to an eulogium which, however, his character and conduct have deservedly obtained. Let me, sire, who conveyed his noble father, the Earl of Ulleswater, to his last home,—let me say, that the English blood which

flows in his veins must have thrilled with delight at the applauses bestowed on him by an English king:—applauses too great, and pleasure too overpowering, to admit of reply. As the ambassador of France, Reginald stands in a dignified station; as a peer and prince, he has high title and name; as a soldier, he wears badges and distinctions; as a knight, he wields a lance which none has hitherto subdued: yet all these are to him nothing, in comparison with the pride and happiness he enjoys in the alliance which he has this day made, and the praises which he has received from the most amiable, the most honorable, and the most distinguished of men."

The goblet circulated cheerfully, and all was harmony and good-humour.

CHAP. XLVIII.

THE JOYS OF WEDLOCK.

MATILDE'S sleep was disturbed, and De Vavasour feared her mind was weakened by the shock she had received. She constantly said,—"Cruel, cruel Theodric!"—"treacherous monster!" and used other expressions, which denoted that, in her sleeping thoughts, she combined the attempt made upon her husband's life with some person to him unknown. When the Countess awoke, she clasped her arms around him, crying, "Thank Heaven, my Reginald, you are safe! I have had most painful dreams, and feel very feverish." Some cooling liquid refreshed her, and she soon fell into a tranquil slumber, from which she awoke, happy in the reality of existence, and that De Vavasour lived to share her earthly prosperity. "We ought," she said, "to be grateful to Heaven, and to mortals too, my Reginald! if you had tasted

that cup, we should have lost the pride of,—I must not say England; I will not say France:—which shall I say, Avignon or Vienne?—but let us look, however, to happier days, and hope that, in the failure of this last attempt, and in the certainty of our indissoluble union, all persecution will cease. How wonderful it is, that every attempt against your life should be foiled by Alathæa!"

"I remember," answered our hero, "being warned against danger, and a person called Ursula was alluded to. I will to-morrow seek an explanation: but be not alarmed, Matilde! you are now my guardian-angel, and your love will be my shield against all harm. Be comforted,—be grateful to Providence,—be happy."

"Be assured, Reginald," replied his bride, "all jealousy is at an end: we have offered up our vows together: I am your wife, and will prove myself your friend. I rely on the sincerity of your affection. Seek whom you will; no curiosity, no fear, shall harbour in my breast: I will make Philippa my model for unbounded love, and Aurélie for unlimited confidence."

"And your confidence, my adored Matilde! shall not be misplaced: you once wished to think yourself the only person I ever truly loved; if such a thought will give you happiness, place it in the folds of your bosom, and let the assurance of its truth give fresh vigor to that bosom's palpitations."

The beating heart of Matilde proclaimed the joy she felt at this assurance from lips that never uttered a falsehood: her happiness was too great: we might say, with the poet,

> "The joys which youth, and love, and wedlock give,
> So rapturous are, we can but taste and live:
> We must but sip,—for if we suck the sweet,
> 'Twill turn to poison, and our fate we meet."

The voice of Patience brought the happy pair to the recollection that there were others in the world besides themselves. "I have had unpleasant dreams, Patience!" said the Countess: "tell my aunt I will take refreshments in my own apartment, and beg her to excuse my absence."

Patience argued with the Baroness, who smiled

at her observations as to the good or ill omen of a dream on a wedding-night.

"You are not so foolish, Patience," said the old lady, "as to believe in dreams, or to expect a young knight will rise from his bridal bed with the sun to chase a stag—leaving substantial happiness for a shadow."

"Count Rodolphe," replied the attendant, "ordered me to announce to the Prince that the hounds were in readiness; but he took no notice either of the hounds, horses, or me: as for dreams, my lady, I dream every night."

"Yes, and I suppose about a husband."

"Yes, Madame, and about a good sort of a knight, of the name of Hawkwood."

"If your affections turn on that point, say no more:—you are of respectable family, and I will take care of your fortune."

"I dreamt, Madame, last night of two H's, great large ones; and the first words I heard this morning were hounds and horses: so my dream is out."

"Well, my child, prepare every thing palatable for my dear niece; and when the Prince is dressed, beg of him to visit me."

Patience attended on the Prince and Princess, and wished them, in the Lady Baroness's name, all the joys that wedlock gives. "All your female friends," pursued she, "wait to wish you joy, my Lady Countess! and when your Excellency, Prince Reginald, is dressed, the Baroness begs a few minutes' conference." Patience blushed as she spoke, and retired.

The Prince, in due time, left his bridal chamber; and Matilde, in a rich morning habit, received the Countesses de Roussigné, Aurélie, and Rosalie. "Thank Heaven you are recovered, my dear sister!" exclaimed Aurélie: "I never saw any one so lovely: my husband would not attend the chase, that he might be the first to wish you joy." The ladies formed a circle around the couch of the Countess, and conversed on various topics, but principally on that of marriage, and her assurance of unbounded joys in the arms of so noble, so loyal, so handsome a husband as Reginald.

CHAP. XLIX.

LADY HAWKWOOD.

The attendants of the court who had stood near the person of the sovereign had determined upon the answer to be given in case of inquiry: "a cup-bearer had been taken suddenly ill." No one could account for the appearance of the stranger; so it was decided that the dead man was an assistant especially called in for that night's service, and that he died from apoplexy. When Reginald learned from his esquire the current story, he had no wish to contradict it, but was anxious to consult Alathæa, and endeavour to ascertain the rank of this Theodric, of whom Matilde had raved in her dreams.

The Prince having obeyed the summons of the Baroness, she thus began:—"Receive, my son, my cordial greetings. I need not ask you if you are happy; your eyes proclaim the joy that dwells in

your heart: you have gained a lovely prize: I now wish you to make others happy. The favorite attendant of my niece has confessed to me her preference for Sir George Hawkwood: Patience is of good descent, and I will make up for her deficiency of fortune."

"I will arrange it, Madame, forthwith," was the Prince's reply. He retired to his apartment, where Hawkwood was. "Have you any objection," said he, "to a pretty girl, and a good fortune?"

"None, sir, whatever," answered Sir George; "but I have an inclination to marry a girl who is pretty, but has no fortune: however, if your Highness says 'Prey,' and points, I will still be your esquire, and obey."

Reginald returned to the Baroness's apartment. Her confessor was present. "I have arranged it, Madame," said our hero, "with one party, and will soon do so with the other." He then hastened to his wife, and said, "I have a boon to ask, my Countess!"

"Name it, my husband!"

"That you will give the hand of your pretty maiden to a faithful follower of mine."

"With her free consent, yes!"

The match was soon agreed on: and when they adjourned to the Baroness's apartment, Sir George was admitted, and retired with my Lady Patience for his mate.

CHAP. L.

A CONSULTATION.

THE above affair being concluded, Matilde took the arm of Reginald; and, as they walked together to the Plaisance, she thus disclosed her thoughts: "My Reginald, we are deeply indebted to the Saxon, and we owe Alathæa a wedding gift: mine is prepared; and, for yours—when last in England, you wore a rich chain: it was very beautiful."

"I shall not wear that chain again; but yet I would not give it to Alathæa."

"Nor to me, my husband?"

"Yes, my love! to you: you have given me yourself, the most precious of all gifts: every thing of mine would be but poor in return. Come with me, the chain is yours."

"I only spoke in sport: if the chain was a gift, it must not again be given; but if it was the gift of love, it must not again be worn."

Reginald placed his beauteous wife on her palfrey; and as he lifted her in his arms, he felt her heart beat quickly. "The day," remarked he, "is most favorable for the hunters; the heat not too violent; and the morning dew advantageous to the scent."

"Perhaps, Reginald, you regret that you did not accompany the King? Hark, there are the hounds; and now hear the merry horn: ride up, and join them, my love!"

"You have been the object of my chase; I have you in my power, and I will not live out of your presence: but, fortunately, the hunters have taken another direction: we are safe, therefore,

from observation, and, except Ethelred, I do not wish to see a man's face this day."

"You have no objection to the face of a woman, I suppose, especially if she is handsome?"

Alathæa received the Countess with a mixture of dignity and mystery in her manner; and when the wedding present was offered, she only bowed her head. Reginald retired with Ethelred. "We owe you much, wife of the Saxon!" exclaimed Matilde; "but my heart is too full to speak my thanks."

"Do not distress yourself, wife of De Vavasour! by recurrence to the past. Look to the future, and be convinced your presence will ensure your husband's safety. The fate of Prince Reginald is connected with woman. That fate is now consigned to you: but, mark me, Princess Matilde! it is no light charge. Be you his guardian-angel; but leave him not! The woman unto whom his fate is assigned must be ever watchful."

"From what dangers can a woman protect a knight, and such a one as Reginald?"

"*I* have protected him. I have, at the hazard of my own life, saved that of one worthy a throne: I would to-morrow lay down my life in his service, did I not know that my existence may prolong that of one whom I adore. Look not on me disdainfully, Lady Matilde! my Italian blood flows not in the same even current as that which feeds your veins. I am not worthy to be the wife of so noble a knight; but would be his mistress in preference to sharing the throne of Edward." The countenance of Alathæa underwent violent changes: convulsive spasms succeeded: Matilde called for aid; and the females who attended the wife of the Saxon carried their mistress to her private apartment, where Matilde witnessed a scene of pain and suffering which we shall not describe.

Reginald had accompanied Ethelred to the cell of mystery. "My object in visiting you," said he, "is to learn certain particulars which appear connected with my fate. I am not aware of having, deservedly, an enemy in this country: yet two

attempts have been made here against my life: a third has been essayed in France."

Ethelred replied:—"There are in the tablets of your destiny several dark spots: beware of the seventh!"

"How many have passed away?"

Ethelred turned over several leaves:—"One—two—three—four!"

"Knowest thou the name of Theodric?"

"There is danger in that name, but his fate depends on yours."

"Canst thou discover where Theodric can be found?"

"Umptikin! call hither Ursula." No Umptikin answered. "I will consult Aristobulus," pursued the Saxon; "he is most learned."

"I will myself," returned our hero, "seek that sage; and if he dares to juggle with me, I will send him to the shades from whence he sprang."

Ethelred regarded the fiery looks of Reginald with surprise. "Aristobulus," said he, "will not do aught to injure thee: beware of injuring him!"

"Let me see this Ursula: she has modes of gaining intelligence without consulting the stars."

"Umptikin!" The dwarf appeared, and by signs gave his master to understand that Ursula was in the apartment of the Saxon Queen. Thither Ethelred directed his course, and throwing back the heavy draperies which separated the chambers, discovered his bride lying on her couch, surrounded by Matilde, Ursula, and her attendants, and evidently in agony.

CHAP. LI.

AN OMEN.

On the entrance of Ethelred, Matilde silently withdrew from the place she occupied, and was met by her husband. "We must retire, my lord," said she: "our presence longer here would be intrusion."

"What is the matter, my love! and why address me so coldly?"

"I have witnessed a scene of pain that overpowered me: my nerves are unstrung: my heart scarcely beats: support me, Reginald!"

The Prince bore his pallid burden to the rude bench fronting the rocky entrance, and hastening for water, met Ursula. "What," said he, "has happened to Alathæa?" The withered mother of the ugly dwarf grinned, but answered not. "There is my purse, Ursula," continued he: "tell me, I implore you."

"Cleopatra has given the King of the Saxons a young prince before ——"

"Hold your tongue," interrupted De Vavasour: "bring water quickly."

Matilde being restored to her senses, again mounted her palfrey. As they rode through the park, they met the King and his suite. After the usual compliments, Philippa addressed Matilde:— "How pale you look, my dear cousin! what ails you, who always look so healthy?"

"My rest," answered the bride, "was disturbed by dreams."

"Dreams! you must not mind such trifles:

but hark! the King gives the signal for silence." They perceived, in the opening of the forest, a noble deer grazing at a little distance from the herd: a slight whizzing noise was heard, and the buck; who had raised his head as if to ascertain what was approaching him, rolled on the ground. An arrow from the bow of one of the royal chasseurs had passed through the eyes of the noble animal. Without the power of seeing, he yet wished to wreak his vengeance on his enemy, and ploughed up the earth with his feet and horns. In his agony and rage, the deer traversed several yards, and fell dead at the feet of Matilde.

The young bride was unfortunately superstitious, and she regarded the animal before her with secret horror, considering his fate as an evil omen.

"You have often wondered, Philippa," said Edward, "that in our excursions through the forest you never saw one of our chasseurs strike a deer. This must be a young sportsman, not to know his duty is but half done."

"I will, sire, take his place," said Lorenzo;

and, jumping from his horse, with his hunting sword he permitted the blood to flow freely.

"By St. George," continued the King, "it is a noble buck, and worthy of being presented to our Lord Mayor of London: he shall have half of it. We must keep the head of our murmuring citizens in good-humour, and good venison is a sure way to win his heart; but even venison will not always have its weight: if we had not our Tower within their precincts, I should not be surprised if my Lord Mayor took permission, in the name of himself and his loyal fellow-citizens, to exclude our gracious self from entering within his walls. Let them beware of that, or we will batter their walls about their ears!"

CHAP. LII.

RECALL.

THE King being obliged to remove to Eltham on business of state, the Primate and his party prepared to depart for London. As Lorenzo was about to mount his horse, Reginald desired to say a few words to him in private, and began thus: "I know, my friend, the expenses of the capital; its follies, and its gaieties. The Count de Lunheim values not money himself, and considers it useless to others. The style in which your mother lives, leaves her little means of saving. For your present use, there is an order on my treasurer for five hundred pieces of gold."

"Your friendship and generosity overpower me; I have nothing to offer but my sword and my thanks."

"It is my intention soon to revisit Italy. I wish to seek Aristobulus: much depends on him:

if the Prince Primate permits, you shall be my companion. Now to horse, and join your friends."

Reginald determined on passing the time of the King's absence in the society of his beloved wife, whose spirits seemed occasionally depressed. A few days only had passed, when a letter arrived from Robert d'Artois, announcing Philippe's intentions to recall our hero from London. "On our meeting," said Robert, "I will tell you the cause of this hasty conduct; but will not communicate it in writing." The same messenger brought the following brief mandate from the keeper of the seals:—"The King has no further occasion for the services of Prince Reginald at the court of London."

"Occasion!" muttered Reginald: "no thanks, no soothing expressions to wounded pride? Edward would not have so recalled me! but even a King shall not insult Reginald with impunity." On announcing his recall to the royal Edward, that monarch was evidently embarrassed and annoyed. "This is a positive affront," exclaimed he, "to our royal self."

"It is, sire," rejoined De Vavasour, "a more direct insult to me."

"If the blow be aimed at you, Reginald, and not at me, I will find something to heal the wound. The Primate has proclaimed you as the son of the Earl of Ulleswater. That title is extinct. The estates, both in Yorkshire and Cumberland, are at our disposal. Return, and receive both at our hands."

"With your permission, sire," replied our hero, "I will be the purchaser of the estates." Edward thought that the time might come when money would be much wanted. "If," said he, "the money were now paid into my treasury, it would be wasted. When you return, I will be indeed a King. Before we part, Reginald! hear me. Remove Count Rodolphe from our court. I like not his attentions to our Queen Mother. If he were single, he should marry; but, as it is, remove him from our court."

CHAP. LIII.

AN ACCIDENT.

THE departure of Reginald was delayed by a stratagem of the King. Retiring from the apartment of Matilde, the Prince was thus addressed by Hawkwood:—"There is great news, sir! Thirteen knights have proclaimed a challenge against all knights of all countries: the spot fixed on is near the cross in Cheapside; a tower is erecting for the Queen and ladies of the court; and young Lord Percy is, I know, one of the challengers."

"Get ready my horse and armour," replied De Vavasour: "see that the brave Gondibert be well shod."

"But you are so lately married, my Prince, that it would be best to leave to Count Rodolphe the management of our French lances. We have here the Count Lorenzo, the Chevalier de Montron, and, they say, old Count de Lunheim is also ar-

rived. Reserve yourself, for the sake of the lady Matilde."

"Think you the lady Matilde would own a recreant knight for her lord and master? No, Hawkwood! the good fortune of this golden scarf, the gift of my noble bride, once saved me from the sword of a caitiff, and may now make me master of the lance of a knight."

Matilde approached; and, having heard the conclusion of the discourse, said,—"And for the first time will the wife bind on the arm of her knight, that which was her maiden gift."

When every thing was duly prepared, the Queen passed, with great pomp, along the Thames crowded with boats full of women and children, anxious to behold the beautiful consort of their sovereign, as well as the lovely wife of De Vavasour. At the moment of embarkation, a slight accident occurred, which to Matilde again appeared ominous. As the Queen's boat pushed from the stairs, a small craft, with a young woman and two children in her arms, was upset. The poor woman had been so anxious to see her High-

ness, that she stood upon the side of the frail bark; and the beak of the Queen's barge touching the opposite quarter, plunged her and her infants into the flood.

"A hundred pieces of gold to him who saves them!" said Matilde, who was the first to observe the occurrence. Reginald was seated bare-headed, next the Queen. His first movement was to throw off his mantle, and his second to plunge into the water. The poor drowning creature rose to his view, clasping her children to her breast: before she could sink again, Reginald caught her round the waist, and, with two strokes of his disengaged arm, reached a boat, and placed the rescued woman in security. The Queen smiled with gracious approbation of his conduct. "The gold is yours, my husband!" said Matilde. "Let your treasurer bestow it where it is most wanted: it will revive that poor woman's courage to see so noble a gift."

The boats then proceeded; and Reginald, on landing, found Hawkwood prepared with his arms and accoutrements, and soon took his station as

leader of the knights defendant. Reginald was surprised to see the gallant chief of the challengers turn away his horse, and single out Count Rodolphe. The fight was a brave one, each knight exerting himself to the utmost: at length, Rodolphe's lance was shivered into pieces, and himself thrown on the ground.

A terrific crash interrupted the sports: shrieks resounded through the air; and, with a thundering noise, like that of the fall of a mighty avalanche, the enormous turret in which the court were assembled, fell to the ground. The youthful victor of De Montleans tore off his helmet, and cried,—"The Queen, the Queen!—in God's name save the Queen!" Reginald was on the ground in one moment; passed with the velocity of an arrow through the crowd; and, springing over that which had been the parapet, forced his way through nobles, and their lately-haughty, but now-dishevelled dames, until he reached the quarter where Philippa and Matilde lay, entwined in each other's arms. With some difficulty, Reginald extricated them from their dangerous situation, and

Edward arrived in time to thank him for his active interference, and assist in bearing his wife to a place of safety. "Order a gibbet," cried the enraged monarch, "to be erected on this very spot, and hang upon it the cause of the calamity."

The master of the works was seized; the halberdiers of the guard prepared to obey orders; the unfortunate man implored for mercy; and vowed by all the saints that he was innocent:—but in vain. Matilde saw the gibbet, and beheld the condemned struggling with the soldiers who dragged him towards it.

"For heaven's sake, Queen Philippa," exclaimed she, "implore for mercy: no man could be so barbarous as wilfully to cause this evil."

Philippa fell on her knees before the King.—"You are the only living being," said he, "who could have saved him. Release the wretch, dismiss him from our service, and banish him from our kingdom for ever."

CHAP. LIV.

THE PRESENTATION.

MATILDE parted from her royal relatives with sorrow; but felt relieved from great anxiety by the thoughts of quitting a country which she believed harboured the enemies of her husband.

Reginald, on his arrival at Paris, waited on Robert d'Artois.—"I am come, Count Robert," said he, "to obey the King's orders."

"The King," replied that prince, "has been imposed on by a false tale. I have all the proofs of contradiction ready, and shall this night seize the traducer; but be silent, or my plans will fail."

The King received his ex-ambassador with apparent coldness. "How happens it, Prince Reginald," said he, "that King Edward has not sent to us the precise declaration of homage which he acknowledged himself bound to pay, according to the custom observed by his ancestors?"

" Sire, the King of England is not, like your Highness, a free agent. There is a preponderance, in the councils of the lords, against the interests of France; and the Earl of Kent is violently opposed to the Earl of March."

" Why did not you, in your official correspondence, state this to the keeper of our seals?"

" I conceived it more prudent not to touch upon so delicate a subject in a public letter, to which public reference might be made. In my private letter to the archbishop of Sens, I stated my sentiments on the subject, and those have since been confirmed."

" There have been other charges made against you," rejoined Philippe; " but as they have not been substantiated by positive proof, it does not become a king to name them."

" If, sire, you consider charges made against a person representing your Highness at a foreign court as frivolous and vexatious, why name them to him?"

" To prove to you that we have considered it necessary to recall you, in order to give freedom of

charge to the accuser, and powers of defence to the accused."

"I await the accusation; and shall then visit the states of the Countess Matilde of Hainault, my wife." The King started at the haughty tone in which this was pronounced; but checking himself, proceeded:—"The Queen has named this evening for the Princess's reception, and we ourselves hope to be honored with a salute of the fair bride."

"I do not think, sire, the Countess will present herself at court without the protection of her husband; and it does not become a recalled ambassador, under accusation for mal-practices, to intrude himself into the royal presence."

"It is not the Queen who has recalled Prince Reginald; and he is too gallant a knight to offer insult to a lady."

"Sire, I shall be always proud to obey the Queen of France."

Reginald bowed, and retired. He found Matilde and her friends in the full bustle of preparation, and was inspired by their eagerness, as well

as by other causes, to appear himself in all the pageantry of fashion, and pomp of chivalric decoration. The court of Paris was decidedly more gay than that of London, and the nobles more dissipated: Edward and Philippa were too much occupied with their own domestic happiness, to wish for splendor; and Queen Isabel was cautious of exciting envy by any unnecessary display.

The Queen of France had used every exertion to render her court brilliant; and the arrangements were such as to lessen, as much as possible, the effect which the presentation of the young Countess was expected to produce. All the handsomest ladies of the Parisian circle were drawn up in array, leaving the Queen, surrounded by her attendants, to form the point of a long oval. When the doors were thrown open, and Prince Reginald led in his bride, the splendor of their appearance far exceeded the imagination of the most animated fancyists of the gay capital. They wore white dresses:—his was of velvet, embroidered with gold; and hers of satin, embroidered with pearls, and looped in front with diamonds.

Their robes were of crimson velvet, worked with gold, and enriched with diamonds, pearls, sapphires, rubies, and emeralds. The Prince was absolutely covered with orders, chains of gold, and badges of distinction: the Princess wore the brilliant zone, the collar of pearls, and other jewels almost too dazzling to behold. Some of the ladies present were rapturous in praise, others splenetic in attack. "How beautiful!"—"How overloaded!"—"How dignified!"—"How haughty!"—"What grace!"—"What nonchalance!"—but the ladies were all of one opinion in regard to Reginald. The distinguished pair moved towards the Queen, apparently careless of the remarks made in whispers as they passed. The presentation over, the folding doors in the rear were thrown open, and the Queen led the Countess Matilde to an interior apartment, where Philippe, surrounded by the nobles and princes of France, was prepared to receive the fair stranger in a manner worthy of the cousin of the Queen of England.

It was now the lady's turn to receive unmixed approbation. Next the Countess walked her sister

Aurélie, and her young step-mother Rosalie: the Countess de Roussigné followed: the Primate was supported by Agenor. Raymond de Valence bowed familiarly to all the pretty dames and damsels, each of whom he had persuaded was the only object for which he lived. After the presentation, the King and Queen retired, and the restraint of their presence vanished.

Robert d'Artois was particularly attentive to the wife of his young friend; and the archbishop acknowledged to Reginald, that the Countess was far handsomer than La Vicomtesse de Turenne. Raymond fluttered round the circle, and then went into close attendance on Rosalie, who consequently became the object of hatred to all the pretty expectants of his favorable observation.

When alone, Matilde asked Reginald who that clergyman was, with whom he had conversed so much. "They call him," said she, "an archbishop; but he talks too freely for one, I think: our good Lord of Canterbury would be much surprised to hear one of the church speak in so unceremonious a manner."

"Very true, my love! yet if our good Lord of Canterbury live long enough, he may be obliged to listen to the mandates of that unceremonious ecclesiastic. We call him Pierre Roger: he was Bishop of Arras, and ——"

"I know him now: you knew him at Avignon."

"You will find him clever and well informed: he is also ambitious; and having kept the seals of France, be assured, he will never be satisfied until he keeps the keys of St. Peter."

In the morning a message arrived from Robert d'Artois.

"My plans," said that Prince, "have succeeded: the King is convinced: and has ordered the traducer of his faithful representative to be thrown into prison loaded with chains, there to await the judgment of Prince Reginald."

Reginald replied:—"Your letter, Count, is a cordial to my heart. Hasten to the royal presence, and implore the release of the person who has vilified my character. Had he boldly and openly accused me, I would have answered him with the

point of my sword; but as he is a malicious, cowardly backbiter, and is proved a liar,—the punishment of his own conscience, and the reprobation of all true men, will be sufficient punishment: he is unworthy to appear in the field of honor.

"Your true and loving friend,

"REGINALD OF MONTSERRENT."

While our hero and his bride were seated at their morning repast, the Archbishop of Sens arrived to conduct the Prince to court, and to assure him of his reinstatement in London. Philippe was very gracious, and consented to his demand of leave of absence; and Reginald accompanied his wife to her own castle of inheritance. We will not detail the journey through Flanders, Guienne, &c. but conduct our reader to Roussillon, where the party were again united.

CHAP. LV.

AN INTRODUCTION.

MATILDE was too anxious to visit Avignon to delay long at Roussillon. Agenor wished to be left in the quiet enjoyment of his domestic pursuits, but Aurélie would not be separated from her lately-acquired, and now much-loved sister. Rosalie was a very amiable person, but had no strength of mind: she was precisely, as her husband said, a pretty play-thing. Raymond de Valence had attached himself to the party. Lorenzo was beloved by Reginald, and his gaiety was a source of constant enlivenment to Matilde, whose tone of character was naturally of a subdued cast. Reginald was a sincere friend, a good soldier, an honorable man, and an excellent husband. He would have made, as his friend Petrarch often said, an admirable sovereign. Under such a king, Italy would have taken its place with the greatest states.

He was a person whom Matilde could not but love, admire, and respect; but his character had lost the little arts of captivation, if it had ever possessed them: it had also lost the fierceness of Le Jeune Lion.

The Pope's reception of the wife of his faithful and loved defender was in the highest degree flattering, and John gave orders to his cardinal secretary to prepare a brilliant entertainment. The first person Matilde desired her husband to present her to, was our former favorite. I speak in the character of author, and, I dare say, generally speaking, my readers sympathize with me. With all her faults and errors, there certainly was something in the character of Cecile very captivating and very entertaining. Without doubt, Matilde was what is called a better match: a Princess of a high family, connected by marriage with a powerful sovereign, possessed of a rich territory and great wealth; beautiful, virtuous, and well educated;—these are very strong upholders of the assertion that Matilde was a better match. But Cecile possessed talents far beyond

those of the Countess. She had lived but in her lover's glory; she contributed to, if she did not almost create, the fortunes of Reginald: married to her, the restraint of their situation would have disappeared, and Cecile might have given the whole force of her mind to the objects she had in view, receiving her share of the success in the approbation of public applause: married to her, there would have been no conflicting sentiment in the Prince's mind; his attachment to France would have been entire; his devotion to the will, and his ardor in the service, of the French king, undivided and unabatable. Now, his friendship for and connexion with Edward, and his possessions in a country where the head of the family to whom he had allied himself might one day oppose Philippe,—all united to damp the ardor which he felt, during his attachment to Cecile, for the welfare and interest of France. In taking this view of the case, we fear we have been a little led away by our acknowledged penchant for Cecile. We have entirely omitted one very essential point; which is neither more nor less than that Sir Re-

ginald de Vavasour was the son of an Englishman, and also a vassal of the Duke of Aquitaine; and that the estates transferred to him were purchased for him, and not granted by the King. It is true, Charles made him a peer of France, with a reversionary estate, for certain services, and perhaps from knowing the secret of his birth, and from loving his character. It was suspected that Philippe also knew the secret. There is another point to consider: would Cecile have behaved with the same devotion to her husband, as she did to her lover? if she did not, and assumed a power which she might have imagined herself entitled to, from kneeling at the same altar, (others have done so,) would Reginald have submitted? No! then let us remain satisfied with things as they are, and go on with our story.

Reginald felt some difficulty in complying with his wife's request: if he went to the Maison de Cominges, Matilde might grow jealous; if he simply wrote the invitation, Cecile might be affronted and angry. In this dilemma Petrarch fortunately arrived, and promised to conduct La

Vicomtesse de Turenne to their castle that evening. Petrarch had ceased to feel interest in Cecile's character; indeed, each day made them more distant towards each other: but Pierre Roger was their mutual friend, and endeavoured to soften down their asperities. The interview between the two rival beauties would have been a source of amusement to any body but Reginald, who was on what some people call "tenter-hooks," and others, "hot irons." Petrarch was thinking too much of Laura, to attend to those present. Raymond de Valence was struck with the charms of Cecile; and the Gascon, who had joined the party at Paris, was playing with his dog. But there was one in the company who had no one particularly to think of, and who felt the full force of the scene passing before him: this was Lorenzo. The principal parties almost touched each other, before the salutation of courtesy took place, and then they almost touched the ground: Matilde displayed more courtly dignity; but Cecile was more gracefully easy.

Matilde was dressed like a queen. Cecile wore

a plain white dress, with a collar of pearls; and her shining chestnut hair, drawn through a circle of the same materials, fell in curls over the back of her neck. Matilde had the advantage of height, and was more round and full in figure: Cecile still looked a well-formed nymph. Each appeared to acknowledge the beauty she saw in the other, but Matilde was the first to express her sentiments. "I have often heard," said she, "of the charms of Cecile; but I find the beauty of La Vicomtesse de Turenne far exceeds what I had imagined Mademoiselle de Cominges to possess—"

"If the Prince Reginald," replied Cecile, "was your informer."

"No," rejoined the other, "it was by the Countess Aurélie, my sister, I heard your beauty eulogised."

"I do not myself venture to place the little beauty I possess in comparison with that of the Countess de Roussillon,—far less with that of the Countess Matilde of Hainault."

Lorenzo could scarcely refrain from laughing at this last modest declaration. Reginald saw Lo-

renzo's ridicule: and to prevent others from joining in it, said, "If there be any rivalry of looks, let Petrarch, who always fancies himself some classic personage, be the Paris, and adjudge the apple."

"And do you think, Sir Reginald," cried La Vicomtesse, "that we would appear before him, as the goddesses did before the Idalian shepherd?"

This was spoken in a half-whisper, and great stress laid on one little word. The observation disconcerted De Vavasour, and discomposed his lady. Lorenzo, seeing some disorder, ventured to afford assistance. "May I ask," said he, addressing Cecile, "if your friend Madame de l'Isle still pines in retirement?"

"Yes," replied Cecile, "I believe she is as melancholy as ever, and warbles like the nightingale, by the light of the moon, in her lonely bowers."

"I am anxious," said Matilde, "to know the interesting Eleonore, and with her permission would visit her: there is also another person, whose beauty is as much extolled as her cruelty is deplored, by a constant admirer."

"If you mean Laura de Sade," observed the Vicomtesse, "I will present you to her to-morrow; and, with your leave, will accompany you to the enchanted, or, more properly speaking, haunted castle, of the forsaken Eleonore. Will you go with us, Petrarch?" No answer being returned, Cecile continued:—"Well, Lorenzo, you shall be his representative. Are you as much in love with Niobe as ever?"

"For a person who finds something to worship wherever he goes, our friend Lorenzo is tolerably constant," said Aurélie.

"Men are inconstant creatures, as women well know," observed Cecile. Matilde blushed, while De Vavasour remarked:—"La Vicomtesse de Turenne cannot call my friend Petrarch inconstant?"

"Not at present inconstant, Prince Reginald," returned the lady: "he has lately appeared to see only one object: as for me, I might as well be out of the room as in it, for him; but, if my recollection of former circumstances at the Convent of

Santa Clara does not fail me, destiny has still a trial for him."

Petrarch, under pretence of business with his Holiness, took leave, while Cecile continued :— "You are a pretty chevalier, Don Franciscus, to bring an unprotected damsel into the castle of enchantment, and leave her to be devoured by a dragon in the shape of that two-legged monster called a man."

"Let me," said Lorenzo, "be the monster."

"Monster or man," replied Cecile, "you shall be my escort home, and let Petrarch fly. I'll lay a wager, I point to the spot towards which his flight will be directed."

As they walked to the residence of Cecile, she expressed very warmly her admiration of Matilde. "I will tell you candidly, Lorenzo!" said she, "that I think Reginald would have been a fool if he had rejected such a treasure for so worthless a being as myself."

"I will not admit such a word: if I were Sir Reginald, I would not have left the beautiful

Cecile for all the Princesses in the world. In my humble opinion, one graceful movement of the Helen before me surpasses all the dignity of the Juno we have left."

"So you want to be Master Paris, and give me the apple, in order that you may be rewarded by Helen. But you are not Reginald: you are a gay lively flutterer, whose heart never was pierced: an arrow grazed it once, and left a wound unhealable: for every pretty face you see inflicts a little stab; so it goes on bleeding freely, but not dangerously. Now, my archer shot right through; and if a certain prophetess wished to pull the arrow out, she feared to venture on the trial: Juno may have snapped the dart, and so extracted it; but the traces of the wound remain, and it may break out again. But as for you, Lorenzo, you are as inconstant as a weathercock."

"To expect constancy in Lorenzo, would certainly be more than is reasonable; at least, if I know him well. Yet he can be constant in friendship: why may he not be so in love? His life he

devoted to Reginald: why not devote his heart to Cecile? It has been the ladies who have tired of Lorenzo, not Lorenzo of the ladies."

"Then your ore of wit is not of great depth; and when the fair patient hears your thrice-repeated observations, she thinks it time, to prevent her sleeping over the fourth, to say—'Good night!' as I do now. Here is my mansion; my page has awakened the porter, who is not over-fond of being kept from his bed.—Adieu!"

Lorenzo found the night, though cool, very agreeable: he determined to act knight-errant for an hour or two, and see what good fortune would throw in his way. Having made a considerable circuit without an adventure, he was returning along a lonely path, when he heard music; and shortly after distinguished words, of which we give more an imitation than an exact translation.

"Her golden tresses in the breezes flew,
And art had wove them in the forms she knew;
But what could art around her brows entwine
Fairer than locks bestow'd by hands divine?
Such beauty is!

"Her eyes were brilliant and her forehead fair;
Her shape perfection, and majestic air:—
Yet the expression forcibly I'll praise,
For 'twas expression did my fancy raise.
Such beauty is!

"Yes! she appear'd an angel from above;
And, like a willing slave, too prone to love
At sight of that, which gods might ev'n inspire;
Thou canst not wonder that my heart took fire.
Such beauty is!"

There was a young man playing, and a young woman listening: if there had not been the last, in all probability there would not have been the first; therefore the minor is the major. The youth who sung was not unknown to Lorenzo, who, lest he should be considered an intruder, quickly retired.

The Countess Matilde, on the departure of Cecile, had also a confidential communication to make, on the subject of their interview. "I am not surprised, Aurélie, that Reginald was charmed with that lively creature: I only wonder how he can endure my solemn manner: I know I am not sufficiently gay; but were I to attempt it, the production would be more like—give me a comparison, my love!"

"A war-horse in a volta than a kitten in a gambol," answered her sister-in-law.

"Very flattering, truly," rejoined Matilde; "but do you not think I ought to be grateful to a person who deserted so many charms for me?"

"Matilde, you are much too proud to be grateful for the love of any man: you have a good heart, and can give love for love. It is true, our amour-propre may be gratified by the homage of a knight who has well judged what beauty is: the difference between your lord and Lorenzo is, that the one has been made love to, while the other has himself made love, and seldom successfully. The Prince is slow to admire: for instance, I lay in his arms without exciting any more sensation than if I had been a log of wood: yet I fear a very little light shown in the eyes of my supporter would have caused a great disturbance in my poor heart. As for my old admirer Lorenzo, he is a moth hovering about the flame of beauty, and will burn himself wherever it shines, be it faintly or briskly."

CHAP. LVI.

A TRICK.

THE proposed visit to Eleonore was delayed by accounts of her suffering under severe illness: the preparations for the banquet were completed, and it was to follow the ceremony of the installation of the knights of the order of Jesus. Pope John appeared in the hall to receive the homage of his knights, led by their grand master, Prince Reginald. As persons ecclesiastic, civil and military, were admitted, the Primate, the Archbishop of Sens, and Count Agenor, were among the initiated: the Countess Matilde, in honor of the day, had invited the inhabitants of Avignon to a superb evening entertainment at the castle of Villeneuve. It happened that Cecile, who had declined dancing, was seated near Reginald, and the conversation began by her praising the beauty of Matilde; after which, rallying her former knight on the variety of

his taste, she inquired after her friend Lucius. The discourse became animated and interesting: it was, however, interrupted by the Count de Cominges, who came bowing up to the Prince, full of smiles and compliments. "May I ask your Highness," said he, "if it be true that Philippe of France has appointed a new ambassador to our court?"

"Not that I know," replied De Vavasour.

"Your Highness, I think, leaves us shortly?"

"To-morrow," returned Reginald, "I depart."

"I wish to consult your Highness previously on a point of great delicacy; indeed it might be done now, if Madame de Turenne would be pleased to amuse herself awhile with that gad-fly, the Chevalier de Valence. I well know, Prince, that you have a sound judgment—an extraordinary one, for your years: you have, however, lived much with those more advanced in life than yourself;—you know what Plato says: but there is a Latin illustration, and Latin is more proper in a lady's hall;—'Sapientes principes congressu sapientium.' You like Latin books, though you do not speak the

language. ‘ La Biblioteca è 'l nutrimento dell' anima.’ ‘ Noscitur à sociis.’ ”

“ They say, father!” remarked Cecile, “ the Prince passed much of his time in our house, and some in your library.”

“ Had he passed more in my library, and less in your bower, it would have been better for all parties.”

Cecile was a little disconcerted by this unexpected attack. “ Have you seen,” said she to her sire, “ Monsieur de Sade? He is searching you every where: there is business of importance in his face: it cannot be an invasion of the Germans, nor is it, at this season, likely to be an overflowing of the Rhone. If not water, however, it may be fire: you know the chimney of the kitchen passes by your library, and perhaps the flue has burst.”

“ Plato, Aristotle, Xenophon, Sophocles, Lycophron, Cicero, Tacitus, Livius!” roared the frightened scholiast, “ rise, and protect your works!”

“ You had better,” continued his daughter, “ hasten home and protect them yourself, and take that wise man with you.”

Monsieur de Sade had left the room: home hastened Monsieur de Cominges. The key was applied to the door; there was no smoke; the books were all in statu quo. He looked at one, then at another, with all the affection of a parent; and at last, finding a passage upon the subject of astrology which occupied his attention, he quietly seated himself, forgetting his dear daughter, the fire, and the world.

"This is a pretty good rub," exclaimed he, "for my correspondent, the learned Aristobulus: I will return and show it to the Prince. But, friend Ennius, you are too harsh: hear what Cicero says."

We already know that the lofty sayings of the astrologer had inspired King Robert, fixed Aristobulus in his favor, and, with the aid of San Germano, recovered the patrimony of St. Peter from the hands of the heretics.

When Cecile had ceased laughing at the success of her trick, she whispered Reginald:—"I was determined to rid you of my father; and, before we part, I must caution you against one who is not your friend. He is arrived here for a special pur-

pose, and my father will never have sense enough to overreach him: if I might venture to correspond with you, I would, in your absence, gather up all that passes, and make you master of certain state secrets." The correspondence was fixed, and the parties separated.

CHAP. LVII.

THEODRIC.

In compliance with his promise to Robert, as well as in search of Aristobulus, Reginald directed his course towards Marseilles, and embarked with Matilde in his ship of war. There was still enough of jealousy left in the character of the Countess to make her happy at leaving the towers of Avignon: light winds prevented the heavy-laden vessel from making much progress; the ship was overtaken by a smaller vessel, and Lorenzo was put on board. "I have brought a letter from King Edward," said he, "delivered to me by a special messenger."—It

ran thus:—"You are not aware of a vow which I made, and which I have performed. In the disguise of a merchant, I have again visited France; I have seen and conversed in private with Philippe, and have gained my point. I have also sent him the act of homage."

The wind freshened; and, carrying all sail, Reginald's ship soon reached Naples. When the vessel appeared in sight, the King ordered all his boats to be manned, and waited until the anchor was cast, and the bow brought up in a line with the Castello Nuovo: Robert then embarked, and steered the royal barge himself. He was received by Reginald with due honors, and conducted to the state cabin, where Matilde was presented. The King had never before seen so large a ship: Reginald had purchased it from the Genoese; and it was capable of containing a large body of men-at-arms, besides the necessary number of sailors, &c. Having satisfied his curiosity, the boats were again towed along-side, and the King conducted his beautiful visitor to the royal residence. During their stay, every exertion

was used to render them happy, and preparations had been made for their proper reception at San Germano. Robert commanded the monks of Monte Cassino to receive with due honors the noble travellers, already provided with the papal permission and recommendation: having partaken of the hospitality of the monastery, and examined its curiosities, the Prince and his suite departed for his castle. The country around was particularly romantic and beautiful, and Matilde frequently accompanied her husband in his rambles through the wild scenery. One day they had extended their ride to an unusual distance, and perceived that they were watched by three or four mountaineers, who leaped from rock to rock, closing on them as they advanced. For a while they disappeared, but in a few minutes afterwards one of them leaped from some thick brush-wood fully armed; Reginald placed himself between the bandit and Matilde, when suddenly the man dropped his sword, calling out—"Il Principe, La Principessa!" Reginald was well pleased to recognise an old follower of Enguerrand, and gave him his purse. The bandit

whistled, and his three companions sprang up, as if from under the ground on which they stood. A sign from their leader caused them to sheathe their stilettos:—"There is the Prince's purse," cried he; "divide it, and keep my share till I return. I must conduct the Prince to his quarters."

They had not proceeded far when a sudden storm came on: loud claps of thunder were followed by heavy rain. The guide hastened to an antique building, the door of which was slowly opened, and a woman appeared: she proceeded with Matilde to an inner chamber, where a young damsel provided clothes of a much finer texture than it could have been imagined such a building would contain. When the dame returned, the guide addressed her thus:—"Is his venerable Eccellenza within?"

"Yes," was the reply, "as usual, studying, studying! but it is near his dinner-hour, so we shall hear his bell: he is very attentive to that; and seldom angry, unless the cook gives him cause."—"Well, Dame, we will pick some of his leavings; but can't you get a robe for the Prince?"

"What Prince?"—"Why, San Germano, to be sure." The dame flew off, and returned with a magnificent robe of blue satin, embroidered with gold flowers. "I dare not pass to his Excellency's bed-room, or you should be better treated: but I pray you, Marquis of Montserrent, to wear this."

Reginald threw off his wet cloak. "It seems I am not unknown to you, good Dame!" said he. A bell announced the hour of dinner. "Florella, are you prepared?" exclaimed the guide. The damsel disappeared. The dame followed, but returned; and, pointing to a winding stair, Matilde and her husband ascended. A door was opened by Florella, and the visitors found, seated before a well-spread board, the sage Aristobulus.

"Welcome—welcome—Prince and Princess! Pray be seated! Monsieur Cotelette will not be pleased if we forget his services. That soup is worth your tasting, Princess!"

"Pardon my refusing, but I never taste soup," replied she.

"Nor Bologna sausage, I suppose?" rejoined

Aristobulus. "Well, well.—these oysters are in high perfection."

"I must eat and drink both for my wife and myself," observed De Vavasour.

"Taste this wine: it is the only time it appears to advantage. Here comes the Sieur, at the head of his young elves.—Eh bien, Monsieur! êtes-vous préparé pour les voyageurs distingués?"

"Oui, toujours, votre Excellence! Si le Roi de France lui-même voyage incognito, laissez aller, ce n'est rien. Goûtez, belle et charmante Reine, mes cotelettes de cailles: vous les trouverez parfaites."

Matilde could not refuse so delicate a request. The birds were split; the breast-bones removed, covered with a coat of delicate texture, and approved mixture; and, having been soaked in champagne, were grillés, and served up with a sauce worthy of the best *artiste* in France. The bouilli was delicious; the fricassee of chickens white and clear; the petits patés light and tempting; les quenelles, les œufs au jus, worthy likewise of the far-famed artisan of Paris; the varieties of

légumes, the rôti, and, finally, the Neapolitan delicacies, demonstrated that l'officier de cuisine had well aided the chef in his endeavours to please our learned gourmand. Champagne, excellent Capri, and Lachryma Christi, cooled in snow; the wines of Bordeaux, Burgundy, and the Rhone, added to those of Italy and Sicily,—made a display which might have satisfied the desires of the most luxurious modern epicure.

"How long have you been in Italy?" inquired Aristobulus.

"A few days only," replied our hero; "a worthy disciple of Robin Hood discovered me, and your Dame below recognised me."

"And well she may," rejoined the former: "you have before seen Ursula: it is she."

When Matilde had retired with Florella to replace her now dry garments, Reginald said to the sage, "I have a question to ask, and one upon which much depends."

"I know what your wishes are; but at night only, and by moon-light, can I answer: at present you are my guest, and we must be gay. How is

Alathæa? She was a noble creature. How is Regius? You know that she has presented Ethelred with a son?"

"Yes, I was with the Saxon at the very hour."

"We know the son is no more his than it is mine. The sorceress has a captivating way; she will make an immense fortune: she must be very rich! What do you think of Florella? I have her in training to supply the place of Alathæa. The sage was interrupted by the entrance of Lorenzo: "My Lord Prince, I have been hunting you from dell to dell, from mountain to mountain: an officer from the court is arrived, and you must to Naples directly."

"Come, Count Lorenzo," said the astrologer, "you must repose a little: my poor household is at your service. Ursula! Florella!" They both entered. "Tell Monsieur," continued Aristobulus, "to serve up something directly. The rain again pours, and the Princess must be contented for this night with our poor accommodation: it is impossible to return, for the clouds portend a

dreadful night." It was decided to remain until day-light, and a chamber was soon fitted up, and two couches prepared. Lorenzo said the floor would satisfy him, and vowed the wines were, if possible, better than the cookery. Aristobulus led the way to his sanctum, and Lorenzo strolled out to look after the horses; but he soon returned quite satisfied, and took a chair in the lower apartment with Ursula. Matilde, feeling fatigued, had retired at an early hour. When the moon rose, the astrologer opened a book. "Here," says he, "is the produce of my last night's calculations. You seek Theodric: he is a native of a country distant from England to the northward: he is a powerful and daring character, and scruples not to use the worst means to attain the object of his desires: he has made many attempts on your life. So long as Alathæa is near you, he will never succeed; but beware of meeting him when distant from her! Ursula knows him well." The dame was summoned, and gave a long account of the plots which Theodric had formed, and, among others, of the affair of the Coliseum; for he

had instigated Franceschi to become an assassin; but Ursula knew him by no other name than Theodric.

The following day Aristobulus accompanied his guests to the castle, where he was richly rewarded; and from thence the Prince proceeded to Naples.

CHAP. LVIII.

ROBERT D'ARTOIS.

THE affairs which demanded his presence being completed, Reginald sailed for Marseilles. On landing, he received a letter, which Matilde saw, and perhaps recognised to be written by a female hand. It ran thus:—"I promised you, my friend, to write only on public subjects; those of the heart I have banished from me for ever. There is imminent danger hanging over the head of one whom you love and esteem. Robert d'Artois, confiding in his services, demanded of Philippe the Comté of which he is now the only living male heir. The

original decree concluded with a most wise recommendation, that Robert should love his aunt who had robbed him of his rights, and that the aunt should love Robert who wished to deprive her of her property. It certainly is not a very probable consequence of a decision contrary to the general rule of succession, that any great degree of affection would arise between the two parties. The defeated nephew hated the successful aunt, and the fortunate aunt feared the unfortunate nephew. You know, my friend, that women will meddle with other people's affairs; and accordingly time produced one capable of acting a chief character on this scene. A woman called Jeanne de Divion had been the mistress of Thierry d'Irhun, late Bishop of Arras:—and now perhaps you may guess how I am acquainted with the subject. At this Bishop's death, she became entitled to certain property, which the Countess d'Artois, executrix of the Bishop's last testament, would not deliver to the claimant. The Bishop had been principal minister of the said Countess, and perhaps, like other ministers, could tell tales

not fit for vulgar ears. Jeanne was determined on revenge. She first assailed the wife of Robert, but ineffectually; then Robert himself; and whether it be that the creature is handsome and cunning, or that Robert is ambitious, we do not know; but she has persuaded him that all difficulty is removed, and that he will undoubtedly succeed to the princely inheritance of his noble family. Here comes my informer; so adieu! C."

"Robert d'Artois," thought Reginald, "is open to flattery, and may be imposed on. He has claims upon Philippe's friendship; but Philippe is a stern distributor of justice. Were I on the throne of France, Robert should have Artois." At Aix, Reginald received another letter from the same hand:—"The clouds thicken over the head of the brave Robert: he has had an interview with the King, and produced documents which Philippe declares to be false. Angry words passed, and Robert was ordered to leave the presence. D'Artois persisted; and the peers decided that the documents were false. Jeanne de Divion has been examined,

has confessed, and is imprisoned. They say Robert has embarked his treasure for England, and will not re-appear before the parliament. C."

"You seem employed in much public business, Prince Reginald!" said Matilde; "for your mind appears gloomy since the receipt of those letters. I am not curious; but that which discomposes the husband must give pain to the affectionate wife."

"There are the letters, Matilde!" replied De Vavasour: "I feel for Robert; I know him to be brave and honorable: I have loved,—tenderly loved him. Curse on the cold policy of Philippe, that did not say,—'I will reverse the decision unjustly given, and place you in your rights without injury to others.' The crown should and shall rectify such evils."

"This correspondence, my Reginald! will, I fear, lead to a renewed intimacy at Avignon; and—pardon the weakness of a female heart, when I say—that Matilde cannot view without pain the attentions of a husband devoted to another woman."

"My heart is yours, Matilde! my body is,—no,

was—my sovereign's:—but my mind is my own. Be not uneasy, my love! the conduct of your husband shall never give you just cause of pain."

Reginald had scarcely entered the Château of Villeneuve, when a knight arrived with letters from England. The person selected by Edward, was Raymond de Valence. The speed which he had used caused considerable derangement to his dress; but with an air of sang-froid, he presented himself, saying, "Excuse me, Countess! The King commands; Raymond obeys; time presses."

The letters of the King were to the following purpose:—"I have bad tidings to communicate. The Earl of Kent, my uncle, has fallen a sacrifice to the malice of the upstart Mortimer, who dares to appear surrounded by his myrmidons, and outface us in our own parliament; but, by St. George! the favor of the Queen Dowager herself shall not protect the minion. There shall be no favorites near the throne of England. Edward my father is too recent an example not to give an awful lesson: there are whispers abroad that the unfor-

tunate King was murdered through the means of Mortimer. Well! his day of reckoning draws near:—thus much of our public news. For your own private ear, they say that Mortimer, in a fit of jealousy at the Queen Isabel's avowed predilection for Rodolphe, has removed his rival from this to a better world. They say this; but I must hope that Mortimer has not this crime also on his head, and that my mother is not the cause of a brave knight's death. We have other news of some moment. Robert d'Artois has been unjustly banished: he is your friend, a brave warrior, and a persecuted prince;—three reasons why Edward should cherish him. Offer him the protection and hospitality of our sea-girt shore, and tell him he shall have both wealth and honors. Commend me to our fair cousin, &c. &c. E. R."

"May I ask, Sir Raymond," said Reginald, "how you came to be the bearer of this news?"

"First, Prince, it was I who told the King that Robert was gainable, and secondly, that Ro-

dolphe was lost. Now the King had long wished to bring over both to his interest; and two prettier masters of the sword I never saw: there are some other little matters, of which I need say nothing at present: our fair Countess comes again.

Reginald wrote immediately to Flanders, where Robert had taken refuge, assuring the unfortunate Prince of his unceasing regard and friendship; offering him the present use of the castle of the Countess Matilde, or, if he preferred it, a residence at the court of England. Reginald ordered Lorenzo to make personal inquiries as to the fate of Rodolphe. "I fear," said he to Raymond, "that none but the old hunters of Montleans would regret the loss of that brave soldier. Were he not a married man, Rodolphe would not deserve censure; but, united to a lovely girl, he ought to have abandoned his former habits, and, devoting himself to his matrimonial engagements, have made his wife forget that she had a husband old enough to be her father."

CHAP. LIX.

EDWARD, PRINCE OF WALES.

THE next letters from Edward announced the birth of a son to that prince:—

"I have great tidings for you, my friend! My beloved Philippa has blessed me with a son, and she suckles him with her own breasts. Heaven grant that he may prove worthy of such treatment, and Heaven bless her for copying the Empress Theodota, whose emblem, with the inscription, 'Pietas Romana,' is transmitted to us.

"E. R."

The second letter, on public business, was as follows:—"Blessed as we now are with the hope of fair inheritance, we may look to public affairs. The King of France urges us to undertake a crusade against the infidels in Palestine, or the Moors in Spain: no matter which we essay; our armies cannot be moved without money, and none

can afford better to assist us than our worthy abbots. The church property is vast: it has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished. Clerical influence, already too great, will grow into unrestricted rule; and our bodies, as well as our souls, will be under its jurisdiction. Touch upon these matters where you now are, and serve a great cause and a true friend. We must not so speak to our good Richard of Bury.

"E. R."

Reginald's answer to the King was brief: it contained hearty congratulations on the happy event, and promises of essaying what his Highness had so much at heart. Matilde wrote to her royal relative in the warmest terms of rejoicing: but yet her mind was ill at ease. She recollected certain prophetic expressions of the Saxon, and appeared subdued.

"What grieves you, my love?" asked her husband. "On a day of such glad tidings, all friends of England's house should wear the face of joy. It is fortunate that the first offspring should be a male child."

"Ethelred has pronounced that Philippa will give birth to as many children as there are months in the year," said Matilde, her thoughts still running in the same course.

"If that prophecy come true, it is fortunate that Philippa is a queen, or such productiveness might be burdensome."

"I must not envy my dear cousin her good fortune; though it is but natural to look for a similar happiness. Are you contented to stand alone, my Reginald?"

"I am not, like Edward, descended from a line of kings; but still I should wish to see the miniature of so fair a thing as thou art, my Matilde!"

"Or so brave, so noble, so distinguished a being as you, my Reginald! Grant me but that happiness, good Heaven! and I shall die content."

"Let us hope for the happiest prospects of futurity; but let us also look to the present. Raymond de Valence forthwith returns to court: we must send by him our birth-gifts to the brave boy, who, I prophesy, as Prince of Wales, will prove worthy of his sire."

CHAP. LX.

CRUSADES.

HAVING learnt that the Duke of Brabant had been threatened with hostilities on account of Robert d'Artois, Reginald determined in person to seek him in Flanders; and Matilde felt no sorrow at being again compelled to undergo the fatigue of a journey. When our hero reached his lady's castle, he learnt that Robert d'Artois had quitted the country, with the intent of visiting his wife at their castle of Conches in Normandy. Thither Reginald determined to follow his friend, but he was again unfortunate; for Robert had been obliged to fly from the number of spies and enemies who surrounded him; and Reginald, with Matilde, travelled to Paris: here he received the King's orders to return immediately to Avignon, with instructions relative to the crusades projected by Philippe, on which he was to confer with the Pope.

Reginald had not forgotten the wants and wishes of Edward, whom he was more anxious to serve than his own sovereign; but he considered it politic to begin with France.

Accompanied by Petrarch, Reginald thus commenced his discourse to the aged John:—"The King of France has imbibed a deep impression of the propriety of a Christian King warring for the recovery of the Holy Land, instead of fighting against a brother Christian for a rebellious territory. It is the character of the King to feel warmly on religious subjects: for my part, I candidly acknowledge, that I think enough, if not too much, blood and treasure have been already wasted in such projects. It is true that Godfrey of Boulogne was so far successful as to be elected King of Jerusalem after the fall of that city, and modest enough to be contented with the title of Duke of the Holy Sepulchre. But he led an army of above 600,000 men. Where is such a force now to be formed? or, if formed, how is it to be paid?"

"I see no difficulty, my son," answered John, "if England joined France heart and hand. The

cause of Italy may also be forwarded by preaching the crusade there: but as for pay, the royal treasuries must suffice."

"The royal treasuries," rejoined Reginald, "are drained; besides, Holy Father! sovereigns and nations are disheartened by the subsequent events, which give little encouragement to potentates: but, as your Holiness says, it is for the good of the church, and the peace of Italy."

Those were strings that vibrated to the heart of John.—"You have taken, my son," said he, "a just view of the case. If Louis of Bavaria were induced to take the cross, after the example of Edward, the faction which supports his views in Italy might be easily trampled down: but you say the sovereigns have no means."

"No, Father! but the church has: I do not mean the head of the church; but the members who live in idleness and riot in luxury, and whose profligacy is hourly exposing the sacred edifice to insult and degradation. King Philippe asks but the tenth for two years."

"Petrarch has already announced my refusal," exclaimed the Pope.

"I know that, Holy Father! but the King has since taken a more extended view of the case, and your Holiness will have a full opportunity of discussing the matter with Philippe himself; for he has ordered hither his troops, and I am honored with their command."

CHAP. LXI.

THE PROJECT DEFERRED.

THE arrival of the King created a great bustle in the city of Avignon, and Philippe announced his intention of receiving the congratulations of the inhabitants. The court-yard of the castle of Villeneuve was brilliantly illuminated, and the apartments were richly decorated. When La Vicomtesse de Turenne entered, in company with her father, to her surprise she perceived, on the right and left of the king, her two friends Reginald and the Archbishop; Petrarch was in conversation with Laura, and felt very unwilling to answer the

questions addressed by Cecile to him:—"When did your friend come? How long does he remain?" &c. The Count de Comtinges was making his obeisances, &c. in a very learned harangue, congratulating the sovereign of France on all the fortunate events of his life, when the King turned hastily round to Reginald, saying, "This was your deputy, was he not? But where is his lovely daughter, of whose beauty and wit report speaks so highly?" Reginald colored; but the Archbishop, more composed, informed Madame de Turenne that it was for her the King inquired.

Philippe detained Reginald near him the whole of the evening, and Cecile retired without exchanging any tokens of former friendship, except animated glances of her brilliant eyes. The early part of the night the King remained occupied with the Archbishop, Reginald, and Petrarch. When the council broke up, the Prince retired to his apartment, and dismissed his page: his thoughts were occupied with his present plan, and the extraordinary fate of his father-in-law, whose sword was now much wanted. He was interrupted by a

soft voice:—"Why so cast down, Prince? Has your mission been unsuccessful?"

"May I ask Don Alphonso," said Reginald, "how and why he gained admission?"

"I have a female friend," answered the disguised lady, "at the castle. I pretended to be ill, and retired to her apartment, where I changed my dress; and now, most illustrious senor! may I ask why you have been so long here without visiting me? Is Cecile de Turenne grown old and loathsome,—or is she more handsome and more dangerous to approach than Cecile de Cominges?"

"My time," replied De Vavasour, "has been much occupied with his Holiness on the subject of the projected crusade. I own the attempt appears to me ridiculous."

"And where is the money to be procured? from the pockets of the clergy, I suppose. I will tell you a secret, Reginald! Two of your council, held this evening, are opposed to your plan: the one is against the crusade, and the other for the clergy; but the latter will neither bark nor bite until a richer mitre deck his brows." A noise in

the passage put an end to these remarks: the Don retreated by a private stair, and the Archbishop entered. "This crusade," observed he, "will prove a foolish idea of the King's: unless it become the means of reconciling Philippe to Robert d'Artois, and maintaining peace with England, we had better oppose it."

"It is very late," said Reginald, "and I am tired: good night to your Grace."

Prince Reginald was awakened by a messenger, who summoned him to attend the King. Philippe was apparently suffering from grief and melancholy: "We must defer," cried he, "our project. I have received sad news: our infant son is dead; and I must hasten to rejoin the Queen, and lament over our destroyed hopes. Public duty must however be first considered. It is positively necessary that the Pope should yield to our wishes. The pride of our clergy is intolerable; but, backed by the decree of his Holiness, we will strengthen our treasury, and be prepared against either foreign or domestic foes." After a pause, the King added:—"We have one in council, whom I suspect to be disin-

clined towards our plans: yet I know a mode to secure his support: it is the Archbishop; send him here."

Reginald hastened to the Maison de Cominges, to consult as to the best measures for success. He found Cecile attired in a most graceful and becoming manner; and was not surprised at the animated expressions of the gallant Archbishop, who was her companion, and who was in fact accusing her of having bestowed all this care on her person, not for him, but for another. "It is disagreeable to interrupt so agreeable a conversation," said Reginald; "but your Excellency must attend the King, especially when I believe it is for your own advantage. His child is dead, and his crusading project abandoned."

"And Christians must still submit to Mahometan tyranny," said Cecile, half-maliciously and half-seriously.

"Sir Reginald," exclaimed the prelate, "I leave you to a much more pleasing occupation, and hasten to condole with my sovereign." With a sarcastic smile, the Archbishop left the apartment.

"What a provoking wretch that is!" cried Cecile; "last night he must force himself where he had no business, and interrupt a very charming tête-à-tête; and now, in parting, he wishes to throw the apple of discord: but he shall not, I am determined; for I will coax up all my pretty ways to extract a few words of kindness from my still-valued friend."

"I am sent by the King to argue with the Pope, but first I hastened here —"

"Expecting, I suppose, to find my slave at my feet! Well, your interruption was a happy one: for, to speak the truth, his Excellency was disposed to be very teazing, as well as very generous. This chain of diamonds was his morning's offering," continued she, taking the splendid gift from the table, and throwing it contemptuously on a chair near her.

"What is there I can do, Cecile! to show my gratitude for past and present favors?" said Reginald, fixing on her arm at the same time a finely-wrought golden bracelet, with figures, in relief, of Venus and the three Graces.

"This is indeed a gift!" exclaimed Cecile: "here is beauty and taste—there wealth and splendor. I shall always remember the donor: but what would Matilde say?"

"Matilde is no politician," thought De Vavasour, "and may not approve of such gifts."

"What can I do to serve you, Reginald?" "except with advice I can do nothing; for though the death of my brother has made me tolerably rich, yet my expenses have increased with my wealth. I have formed an establishment of my own; and had you remained at Avignon, you should have been my visitor. No one but Eleonore is in the secret."

"Not even Pierre Roger?"

"No, nor shall be!" A page announced Petrarch. "I have sought you," said he to Reginald, "everywhere. The Pope's sudden indisposition prevents his seeing you. I am entrusted with his commands." Reginald hastily took leave, and accompanied Petrarch to Villeneuve.

"The King has seen the Pope, and I have received his Holiness's order," said the poet, "to

frame a decree which will dismay the clergy. I do not pity them: they are too rich, and their charity does not keep pace with their wealth. But, Cæsar! may I ask how you escaped M. de Cominges?—for he has composed an hymeneal ode, which he means to present to you; and when his daughter marries, by transposing a few words, the same learned wonder will appear dedicated to her. He is an amusing, if not an instructive author, and I am sure his ode will have more admirers than my Africa."

"Fools will applaud him, but wise men admire you," answered Reginald; "your dislike of the daughter makes you severe on the father."

"Once I considered Cecile as a sister," rejoined Petrarch, "for she was the firm friend of my brother, if I may so call him: now she is fallen in my esteem, for her sacrifices to ambition and avarice. I begin to hate all prelates:—no, not while the Bishop of Lombes lives, not all."

CHAP. LXII.

THE FIELD OF EXERCISE.

When Philippe had left Avignon, Reginald had nothing to occupy him except the wishes of King Edward, which he found some difficulty in accomplishing, as he thus stated:—"It is true, sire! that Philippe has succeeded in his request; but the kingdom of France is differently situated, and the clergy more immediately under the eye and power of the Pope: besides, being resident in the heart of the land, his Holiness may think it prudent to comply with the King's desire. The English clergy are more obstinate; but they say that some have spoken in a tone not satisfactory to the Holy See, which in general dislikes theological discussions, and more particularly is averse to doubts and inquiries, unless originating with itself. John ought to be indulgent to others, for he has drawn upon himself much censure by cer-

tain doctrines which the people here think he would not maintain were he poor instead of rich, and which they say have displeased Philippe. But, sire! let his doctrines be what they will, his heart is devoted to wealth, and the moiety your Highness offers, as well as the arguments above alluded to, will have due weight."

"REGINALD."

By the same messenger, he wrote to Lorenzo, charging him, by stratagem or force, to obtain an audience of Mortimer, and accuse him boldly of the retention, if not murder, of Count Rodolphe.

Matilde was heartily tired of Avignon, as well as deeply hurt at the conduct of her husband towards the object of his former passion: it is true, that, in her presence, he avoided all display of attention; but she learnt from many sources that Reginald was frequently a visitor at the house of Cecile. On a particular occasion, when Matilde was anxious to be present at a party of pleasure, she was obliged to decline, as her husband, without whom she never joined in amusements, was absent.

By chance, as it appeared, the Archbishop of Sens demanded audience, and was admitted: shortly after, a messenger came from court, desiring the ambassador's attendance. "Perhaps," said the Archbishop, "he is at the Maison de Cominges."

"I was desired," rejoined the messenger, "to seek him there in the first instance; but neither the Prince nor the Vicomtesse were to be found."

It happened that Reginald had been apprised by Hawkwood of the arrival of a body of troops; and, immediately set out for their station, in the plain on the route to the Pont du Garde. In this direction was the present abode of Cecile. Reginald commenced the usual manœuvres then in practice among knights and men-at-arms. Cecile rode near, with Eleonore, to witness what was going forward: the trumpet blew; the knights galloped from different points, and formed a column in the centre: they then wheeled, and the infantry advanced in open bodies, dispersed, regained their position; — and the knights galloped forward through the open spaces, with their spears in rest. The knights then broke off to the right and left,

and the trumpet of the commander directed the movement which was meant to close the day with éclat. Unfortunately the halberdiers and bowmen had advanced too far; consequently, the knights, in regaining their positions, made an unexpected charge, and the horse of Madame de Turenne took fright. Cecile had incautiously rode too near the line: her page tried in vain to detain the enraged animal, who broke from his grasp, and rushed towards the troops: the guard on the flank for a moment arrested his progress, but the wily animal evaded them, and galloped along the line. Reginald commanded strict silence as he dismounted, and placed himself on the right of his horse: as the steed galloped past, Reginald sprung forward, seized the bridle with his left hand, turned round the horse, and Cecile fell into his arms. He carried his lifeless burden to a tent, where his pages brought water, vinegar, and essences: in a short time the blood began to circulate, and Cecile beheld Reginald at her side. "Where am I?" exclaimed she: "where is the Countess de l'Isle?"

"You are in safety," replied Reginald, "and I

hope, unhurt." She was conveyed to her home, and Reginald reluctantly turned his horse towards Avignon, having promised to meet both ladies on the following morning at the Château de l'Isle.

CHAP. LXIII.

SUCCESS.

On meeting, Cecile addressed him thus:— "Your object at Avignon is not merely that which you avow. I know a way of ensuring success: you have used it once; scruple not to try it again. I cannot now aid you, as formerly, in an open manner, having, from motives not the most honorable, allied myself to the plans of another; but for your interests, I can sacrifice all alliance, and will counteract those who wish to injure you. The love of a man fades from his memory when the indulgence of his passion ceases; but a woman who has once fondly and truly loved, never forgets the

sentiments which ruled her bosom, unless they are erased by the hand of ingratitude."

"I am not ungrateful, Cecile! no, command me to the proof. I owe gratitude to Edward, but not to Philippe."

"Philippe likes not your popularity, nor your liberality; and your courage he would dread, if monarchs could fear. Go to the palace, be largely liberal, and prosper."

They now met Eleonore, and strolled through the walks that embellished her residence: they spoke of past days and of Petrarch. Reginald praised his integrity, his patriotism, and his honor; Cecile his talents; and Eleonore his beauty. All agreed that he was worthy of admiration; and the day passed away agreeably and imperceptibly. As they rode back to Avignon, Cecile again recurred to the accident at the field of exercise:—"It is very strange that you, Reginald, should be the person whom fortune selected for my preserver. Each person, they say, has a good and evil angel: you are my good, and —— no, I will not name who is the latter. Reginald, I am ashamed to acknowledge that my heart is corrupted by avarice

each day the passion (and it is an evil one) gains greater power over me. When first I knew you, I had but one failing: of that I was conscious; and now I am guilty of every thing but ingratitude to you. There is one who has gained an ascendency over me by means of this vice; but I am still sufficiently mistress of myself to recollect that you were the only person I ever loved. I speak of what I felt for you, as if you were not present: if I wished for a return of former days, I should use other means; for I am now artful, as well as ambitious and avaricious. Did I wish to regain your heart, I would not acknowledge myself unworthy of your esteem." Cecile perceived her father approaching them, with his usual superfluity of bows and salutations: Reginald returned them with courtesy, and accepted his hospitable invitation. "Since the Prince condescends to enter the Maison de Cominges," said its owner, "I will order a slight repast to be prepared for his reception, and invite Monseigneur de Rouen; for you must know the eminent Pierre Roger is again promoted."

The Prince entered the Count's library; and

with a sapient air M. de Cominges commenced:—
"His Holiness grows old; he cannot live long; whom do you wish should succeed him?"

"You speak, Count, as if I could command the cardinals."

"You have great power; are the friend of two Kings, and also of Petrarch, and he guides Cardinal Colonna: you are also the friend of the first authority in this house; and some people we know have power."

"I should be well pleased to see the Cardinal Colonna at the head of the church."

"We must see to it then: there are ways and means!"—and the Count looked more sapiently than ever.

A page announced that his mistress expected their company, and Cecile received them in a chamber which displayed the height of luxury and wealth. It was lighted from a dome. On one side was a library, and on the other a dining apartment: beyond the library was her own private suite. "I will look over that manuscript, my dear!" cried her father, "while you do the honors of your

house. It is, I fear, too dark to see your beautiful garden."

While the Prince was examining the luxurious appendages of the fair Cecile's toilette, &c. a tremendous storm commenced, and seemed to increase in fury. "You must not leave us this night," observed the lady: "my former apartments can be prepared for you. No one would turn a Christian into the street in so dreadful a tempest." The page announced the evening repast: if he had called it a superb banquet, he would not have exaggerated; for the preparations in the supper-room were quite equal to those of the toilette: but we have said too much about banquets and feasting. Correctly speaking, heroes and heroines should have no appetites, and come comfortably clean out of a cavern or filthy dungeon, where they had been confined for months or years: but ours are not of that class; and we hope not the less acceptable for liking good cheer, good wine, good furniture, good clothes, and plenty of good water.

The Count seconded his daughter's invitation, and Reginald at length consented to stay the

night. Whatever might have been Cecile's wishes, he determined, however, to remain only until the storm ceased: and passed the time in preparation for an audience with the Pope on the following day. Reginald was now an ambitious politician, desirous of distinction in the field of diplomacy. He had received news of the discourse of the Archdeacon of Rouen, and the consequent determination of the King and nobles to take the cross; and he was ordered to make further exactions. "Be largely liberal," was Cecile's constant advice; and his first movement, on returning at an early hour to Villeneuve, was to forward certain presents for his Holiness's treasury; and the ambassador soon followed. "What think you now, Prince Reginald?" said Pope John; "are not the arguments of the Archdeacon overpowering?"

"They are, sire! good for those who wish to use them to advantage."

"Are you not one of those, my son?"

"No, Holy Father!"

"You have not then touched the cross?"

"No, sire! nor will I; but I will plead for

those who will. Edward of England demands your aid: he is of generous bearing; and wishes to furnish troops for the holy cause."

"Nobly intended; and he is rich withal."

"No, Father! not rich, but he has those within his realm who are rich; and if your Holiness will but grant a privilege to Edward for four years, similar to that which you have given to Philippe, he will devote the just moiety to the church."

"But—four years, my son ——"

"Are soon passed in crusades, but make great advancements in buildings. I have told the King that your Holiness is occupied in erecting a palace; and his Highness entreats me to say that, besides the moiety, he will contribute to that undertaking." Cecile had given Reginald his clue; and before he left the palace he was completely successful. On his return to Villeneuve, he met Lady Hawkwood: bustle and occupation were portrayed in her countenance.

"Whither so fast, Lady Patience?" said Reginald.

"My lady's *patience*," rejoined she, "is exhausted, and she will no longer abide here:—this hour she sets off."

"We wish our lady a good journey, then," answered De Vavasour: "when we have arranged our affairs, we will follow, with due humility, and obedience to her sovereign will." A door opened as Patience hurried on, and a visitor entered:—it was Cecile. "There seems a storm brewing," said she: "think you it will break here? But tell me, Reginald, and quickly, have you succeeded or not?"

"Yes, all will be well; and now I am considered as granting the favor, and as such am to be rewarded. See you those sumpter-mules? They are well laden; dispose of them as you will." As Cecile turned away to hide her smile of delight at the thoughts of such a gift, a page announced that the Countess Matilde desired the honor of an audience. "You cannot be so ungallant, Prince!" remarked Madame de Turenne, "as to refuse such a boon: and, as I am now but an intruder, I leave you to enjoy the fruits of your suc-

cess." Reginald might have said, "the best part will be enjoyed elsewhere;" but he merely bade farewell, and followed the page to his lady's chamber.

CHAP. LXIV.

A TETE-A-TETE.

Reginald entered with a thoughtful and embarrassed air: he had passed through rooms crowded with paraphernalia, and saw strewed around all the etceteras which his wife's grandeur and comfort required: groupes of pages and damsels were busied in preparation; and gentlemen ushers, chamberlains, and other officers of his lady's household, gave and received a contrariety of orders. Reginald found Matilde apparelled in her riding-dress, but evidently with downcast looks, and eyes swollen with tears. The dreams in which Reginald had indulged, of visiting Paris and London as the accredited envoy of the Pope,

the honors which he hoped to receive at the hands of Edward, and the thanks which he deserved at those of Philippe, were all forgotten: his wife was in tears. The loveliest of women sat before him overpowered with grief. "What afflicts you, my beloved?" said he.

"I would wish to think," replied Matilde, "I had no real cause of sorrow; but thoughts will intrude, and the remembrance of your former attachment to another *will* pass across my mind, when the favorite again reclaims her power. You have devoted much of your time to the Vicomtesse; have passed a night under her roof, and she has privately visited you in this castle."

"Quite true, my love! but her visit was connected with public, and not private affairs. I have been contravened by one whom I took to be my friend; but through her whom you dread, I have gained my point." Reginald, under promise of positive secresy, related all that had passed; and a load of grief was removed from the heart of Matilde by this simple method of telling the truth.

In the morning, the Prince, when descending from

his apartment, heard his name uttered in a faint voice. He saw a female figure veiled from head to foot, who whispered, "I have something to communicate which it may be useful to hear." They entered a private chamber. "Your plans," continued the visitor, "have been discovered, and the Pope upbraided for his weakness in yielding to a robbery on the church's patrimony. Certain observations upon the case concluded thus:—'If this young man knew as much as I do, he would not be so zealous to serve Philippe.'—'Is not he his patron, friend, and sovereign?' said I.—'The latter only,' was the laconic answer. I pressed for an explanation; and found that a courier to Count Robert had been bribed, and your letter delivered to the King."

"Can it be possible," exclaimed Reginald, "that a monarch would so far descend from his high station as to encourage spies on the actions of his subjects? Cecile, I never loved, and now I hate Philippe: this is the last time I will take employment in his service." Reginald leaned against the wall in a transport of rage, covering his eyes

with his hands. "Do not give way to anger, my loved friend!" Cecile advanced, and leaning on his extended arm, endeavoured to assuage the storm which she had raised. At this critical moment Matilde entered. Seeing the attitude in which Reginald and Cecile were placed, she said, "I ought to apologise for the unseasonable interruption of so interesting a tête-à-tête, but I was not aware of such a visitor." Reginald started, removed his hands, exclaimed "Matilde!" but she was gone, and the sound of horses' feet soon announced a general departure.

"A very unceremonious mode of taking leave!" observed Cecile: "an English fashion, I suppose; or perhaps La Comtesse Matilde is jealous of my poor charms,"—(taking a glance of satisfaction at her well-turned form while she spoke.)

"To speak frankly, Cecile!" replied our hero, "I was forced last night to explain away imaginary evil; and it is rather unfortunate that we should be found in such close intercourse; but since the Princess has quitted the field without a conference, I will not be so ungallant as to let

you depart, without offering the morning's hospitality." When the moment of parting arrived, Reginald said, in a hurried voice, "We may never meet again, Cecile! in whatever country I may be, I shall always remember you with affection and gratitude." He folded her in his arms, and Cecile for a moment forgot every other earthly object: she started at the sound of an opening door; a face appeared, and as immediately withdrew. Reginald hastened towards the intruder; no one, however, was to be seen: he again sought Cecile, but she had also withdrawn. He mounted his horse, and, descending the steep entrance, saw a white handkerchief waved by as white a hand: both disappeared, and Reginald galloped on to the legitimate object of his regard.

CHAP. LXV.

A RESIGNATION.

THE person who had so unexpectedly appeared was our old acquaintance, the green man. Reginald, on coming up with him, said abruptly, "Good morning, Count de Lunheim! what brought you to Villeneuve?"

"At so unseasonable a moment, you might have added, Prince!" answered the Count, his features almost relaxing into a smile.

"We will not mind that now."

"If you are not offended, give me your hand: I have a regard for you: I have some business with the Primate and with Count Lorenzo. Would they were here, for my horse is tired."

"I will inform my Countess of your presence." Reginald soon overtook the Lady Matilde. "Our friend the green man," cried he, "is on the road he has business with the Primate, and wishes to

ride with us; but, as his horse is tired, it will be some time before he joins company."

"I cannot," replied the lady, "await, on the high road, the arrival of a rough soldier."

"I suppose, Madame," returned her husband, "that you are in haste to reach Orange, and make sketches of its antiquities."

"I was anxious, Prince! to hurry from a place which has become odious in my sight, and where my presence was so little desired." The tone and manner indicated anger; and Reginald, unaccustomed to any language but that of affection, dropped his reins, and his horse stopped: Matilde and her attendants rode on.

Undecided how to act, wishing to conciliate, and yet too proud to offer any defence, Reginald remained in his fixed position. His attention was soon turned to the beauty of the scene before him. At a distance appeared the strongly-fortified castle of Villeneuve, and the spires and towers of Avignon: on the Rhone were various boats laden with troops and baggage: the horses that towed them scarcely had force to gain ground against

the rapid stream: knights and their followers were moving by various paths; and in the front was the group, among whom rode the fair cause of his abstraction. The rays of the newly-risen sun glistened on the arms of the escort: it was a picture, to complete which both still and animated life gave their aid. "I must not be thought cruel and unkind," thought he, "by Matilde." He rode forward; and, on reaching the party, said, "I could, Matilde, satisfactorily explain all; but the tone in which you spoke hurt me deeply."

"I will," answered she, "be more cautious in future: I do not wish to offend you, although your conduct has pained me." When Matilde heard the intelligence which had caused the anger of her husband, and which Cecile had endeavoured to soothe, the Princess declared her approbation of his decision to go to England without further communication with King Philippe. From Orange he wrote the following letter, and forwarded it by Sir George Hawkwood:

"To the Keeper of the Seals, &c. &c.

"I beg your Excellency to inform your royal

master, that I hereby send His Holiness Pope John's sanction to levy, for three additional years, a tenth of the property of the church, in special aid of the crusade. I am also entrusted with a letter to King Edward, pressing him to unite with France in this high purpose. I have enclosed reports, which will explain the state of the troops assembled under my command: I can assure your Excellency that the knights made an appearance worthy the cause in which they were about to embark. The King having ordered the troops for a short time to return to their respective homes, and the object of my embassy being attained,—I shall hasten to London without visiting Paris. If the King wishes to know why I do not personally deliver the enclosed valuable document, my answer is,—that I have discovered the means by which my offers to the Count Robert d'Artois became known, and I think no man of honor should continue in the service of a court where such practices are countenanced. I therefore deliver my resignation of the high powers given me. This letter having no further object, &c. &c."

"Let us pass some days," said the Countess, "at Roussillon, for there I shall be truly happy. In England my fears, and at Avignon my jealousies, alarm me: but at dear Roussillon, there is nothing to dread, and every thing to love." The castle had undergone great improvements; the pleasure-grounds and gardens had been extended; and every thing wore the air of the constant residence of a rich nobleman. "We want only," said Aurélie, "my dear Agenor, to complete our happiness: the presence of one husband, and the absence of another, would change the scene to advantage. What can have brought that disagreeable German to trouble us with his presence? Let us advise him to pay a visit to Montleans, and take that talking Gascon, his companion, with him."

CHAP. LXVI.

THE TIDE OF FORTUNE.

Our great bard says, "There is a tide in the affairs of men," and there certainly is in those of fortune; for, whether good or bad, it seldom comes in a solitary shape. On the morning after their arrival at Roussillon, the Primate had a conference with the green man, and Reginald was requested to attend. "The Count," said his Highness, "has commissioned me to speak to you on a financial arrangement. As his expenses have been paid by the Emperor, his pay was more than sufficient for his other wants, and the produce of his estates has been expended on their improvement: a relative of the house of Bavaria wishes to become the purchaser, and the Emperor has expressed his approbation. What do you advise?"

"May I speak freely?" asked Reginald.

"As freely as you please," said the green man; "but briefly."

"Lorenzo has declared he never intends to live in Germany; so sell, if you like."

"The bargain is struck, and the purchaser has already signed." The Primate and Reginald witnessed the document. "Now," pursued De Lunheim, "as the interests of Lorenzo have been so freely disposed of, we will make a fair division,—half and half,—and the whole when I die;" and he added, "I am going over to Montleans, to take a day's sport with Monsieur De Chapennes and Don Hubert. Here, Prince Reginald! is a letter for Edward of England: deliver it yourself."

"Do you know the contents?"

"Not a syllable: I never ask questions; and do not wish to have my head bothered with other people's affairs: my respects to the ladies!"

The sportsmen rode over to Montleans, and were soon seated in the great hall, surrounded by huntsmen and soldiers. Hubert opened the conversation: "Would that our chief were here!

when women are away, he handles a bottle as well as a boar-spear."

"Have you heard any news of his Countship?"

"All the news I have heard, Monsieur De Chapennes, is from Avignon. They report there that Reginald has been giving Philippe a helping hand. Folks say the King is a just prince; but, by St. Jago! he will claw the church gold pretty tightly." The trio retired to a smaller chamber, apart from the vassals, to enjoy their wine and jokes; and the former was the most select of the two, for all Don Hubert's waggery was at the expense of the married men of Vienne. In the absence of the Primate, he had undivided sway there, and converted the city into a town of misrule.

The trio were high in spirit, when the chief huntsman entered with the intelligence that a bear had approached the castle, and killed one of the shepherds. "Get six couple of the strongest dogs, and send them with as many stout archers to the rear of the enemy, and we will

attack him in front," said the green man. Every body appeared delighted except Chapennes, who went because he wished to be thought very brave.

Armed with cross-bows and boar-spears, the two parties advanced to the rocky point where the bear had been last seen. The green man perceived his enemy, and with an arrow struck the jaw of the animal, who roared with pain: Hubert inflicted a severer blow, and the bear fell on his side. The green man now rushed forward; and, climbing to the point, struck his boar-spear into his adversary's body. The wounded savage raised himself on his hind legs, and seized the German with his fore paws: the pain of the pressure, as shown by the movement of the muscles of the green man's face, must have been tremendous. The dogs now advanced: the bear had yet strength enough to spring forward, and was dashed to the ground with his prey firmly fixed in his monstrous gripe. Two dogs still kept their hold. Hubert struck the animal through the heart, and his paws were chopped off. The green man was dead. Six bowmen bore his body to the hunters' hall, and others carried

his lifeless opponent. The unfortunate Count was laid on the great table, with his bow and spear crossed above his head, and the bear stretched at his feet. A messenger was despatched to Roussillon, and he conducted Reginald to Montleans.

The scene which presented itself was most curious. Near to where the green man and the bear were deposited, sat Don Hubert and Monsieur De Chapennes, with a flaggon of wine before them. The hall was dimly lighted: yeomen, hunters, and dogs were formed in various groupes, eating, drinking, gaming, or quarreling, as best suited their fancies.

Every one regretted that so brave a soldier should fall thus ingloriously; but as many pleasing events followed the misfortune, the grief which had naturally arisen soon faded away. 'Lorenzo became the master of an undivided fortune, and the still beautiful Angelina de Roussigné was a widow. On the evening of the interment of the Count, as a knight of St. Maurice, in the cathedral church, a stranger entered the grand aisle. Happening to stand near Chapennes, he demanded of

him who the deceased knight was. The Gascon, always willing to be communicative, told the whole story, with many additions as to his own bravery and danger. When the ceremony was over, the stranger presented himself to the Primate, saying:—"I am, sir, son to the steward of the late Baron Sturmzein. At the death of that nobleman, his heir, who was a rich merchant, rebuilt the old castle, made great agricultural speculations, and, by economy and good management, turned an unprofitable into a profitable concern. Late in life he married his housekeeper, who was a perfect virago. The old man died broken-hearted: he has left to Count Lorenzo his vast estate; and I assure you that the barony of Sturmzein is as noble and as beautiful a spot as is to be found in all Germany." The young stranger was invited to accompany the persons who had been present at the funeral to Roussillon, where the ladies remained. A loud knocking at the gate disturbed the conversation which had followed the return of the party; and Agenor and Lorenzo, with Raymond de Valence, entered. Aurélie was the first to re-

late the news, and to congratulate Lorenzo on his succession to an unexpected fortune. "My news," said Agenor, "is not of so good a complexion. My unfortunate father is no more. The time that has intervened must however soften your sorrow, Rosalie! and the tears I have shed shall not now be renewed. We must not murmur at the decrees of Providence."

CHAP. LXVII.

THE CASTLE OF NOTTINGHAM.

When the ladies retired, to condole over the loss of a father and a husband, Angelina endeavoured to soften the misfortune that had occurred, by reminding her daughter of the slights she had received from her neglectful spouse. "It is true, very true, my mother!" answered Rosalie, "but still he was the father of my child; and, when present, was truly kind. I cannot but weep for his loss."

"I should also weep, Rosalie," said Matilde, "but my tears refuse to flow. I scarcely knew

my father; yet he was all kindness, and never did he wound my feelings, save when he sent his warlike priest to command me to marry when I was too willing to be persuaded. I have other cause for grief: but we must bury our thoughts in the recesses of our hearts. It does not become a daughter to advert to a father's conduct."

While the ladies indulged in sorrow, Lorenzo related the following particulars.

"While Count Agenor," said he, "sought tidings of his brave father in Navarre and Flanders, I traversed England. On returning to London, I recollected the wise woman; and, expecting to meet the beautiful queen of sorcery, hastened to her residence — but, from causes which I need not name, I found in the place of beauty a mass of ugliness. Throwing down my purse to the old hag that occupied the throne of the Fates, I impatiently waited a reply to my queries: I was ordered to appeal to the King, and demand an interview with Earl Mortimer. I hastened to the castle, was graciously received, and obtained the King's commands for the favorite of Isabel

to admit me to his presence. It was late when I reached Nottingham Castle, and the Queen had retired; but I was admitted to the hall, adjoining the chamber of Isabel, in which sat the Earl. Mortimer imperiously demanded how I dared to intrude upon his privacy at so late an hour? My answer was, that I came to demand the person of Count Rodolphe.

"'Rodolphe,' replied the haughty favorite, 'insulted me, and killed my son, who had the courage to revenge the affront offered to the gray hairs of his father: Rodolphe also insulted Queen Isabel; and what could a nobleman, a faithful servant, and a minister do, when he heard the Count avow an unlawful passion, but punish the daring insolent? I therefore seized Rodolphe. Perhaps you would wish to see him. He is here, in this very castle; but much altered, I dare swear!' Mortimer summoned his guards, and two men of ferocious aspect entered. 'Show this youth,' continued he, 'the apartment of the Frenchman; and mind you treat him as he deserves, bearing, as he does, the signet of Edward

to enforce an entrance into our Castle of Nottingham!'

"I saw a door uplifted of massive iron, disclosing steps which led into the gloomy dungeons beneath the floor on which I stood: I saw, by the dim light of a lamp held by one of the guards, the villanous aspect of him who held it, and the dark meaning of Mortimer's sidelong glance. Obeying the impulse of the moment, I drew my sword, and sprang forwards, but was seized and disarmed: others of the guard advanced, and were on the point of forcing me down the chasm, when a roaring sound, like the sea rushing into a cavern, caught the ear of Mortimer. 'It is the knell of death,' cried he: 'let the grim monster have his prey: away!' Heavy gusts of wind burst through the vaults beneath, and made the torches flicker which the soldiers held over the gloomy gulf. An armed head appeared; and the grim ruffians, who could in cold blood have slain a defenceless prisoner, flew from the supposed apparition. It was however no spirit, but the vigorous arm of a knight which seized Mortimer in its strong grasp, and dragged him towards the assailing soldiers.

who poured in, like Lucifer's legions issuing from Tartarus, to spring upon their prey. The Queen, awakened by the struggle which Mortimer made to resist the mandate of his captor, exclaimed, 'My son! my son! save the gentle Mortimer!' But the knight's orders were peremptorily obeyed.

"'I come here,' said I, 'to seek Rodolphe de Montleans: this man, now my prisoner, knows his cell; and ——'

"'Lead on directly,' cried he to the soldier; 'or take a short prayer!—for ——'

"The man suddenly obeyed, and was followed by the knight and myself. Having unbarred an iron-bound door, he entered a square dungeon, the stench of which was suffocating: there lay the mouldering body of my once gallant brother-in-law! Raymond ordered a guard of honor to attend with the chaplain, and we followed his remains to the grave. At Paris I met my afflicted friend, Count Agenor."

We will not dwell upon other events, but proceed with our story. Reginald received a messenger from Edward, with the following letter:—

" My friend,

" Count Lorenzo will have informed you of the seizure of the traitor Mortimer: the conduct of the Queen implicated her, and gave a colour to the insinuations of the nobles, who dared to say our mother was enceinte.

" It is impossible so handsome a woman could so act with an old gray-headed grandfather: I acquit her entirely; but the popular voice is too strong, and I have removed her Highness to the castle of Rising, where she shall be treated as the daughter, wife, and mother of royalty: knights, chamberlains, and pages shall be her attendants, and dames of honor her companions. Mortimer has paid the forfeit of his crimes: he has been hanged, drawn, and quartered; his head is fixed on the Tower of London, and his four quarters sent to the principal cities of England: my nobles have sworn fidelity, and I am now really a King. Be assured from henceforth there will be no traitors in England. Bear this news to Pope John, and press him to our wishes, &c. &c.

" Edward R."

The messenger had another packet, which was to be delivered to the Pope; and Reginald, thinking the moment favorable, although further concession could not be expected, decided on returning to Avignon, and Lorenzo was the companion of his hasty journey.

CHAP. LXVIII.

ST. AGNES' NIGHT.

THE years that had passed had in their course improved both the mind and person of Eleonore de l'Isle, since her dream on St. Agnes' eve had alarmed, yet pleased, the fair pupil of Cecile de Cominges. One of our dramatic poets says,—

> "And on sweet St. Agnes' night,
> Please you with the promised sight,
> Some of husbands, some of lovers,
> Which an empty dream discovers."

Our readers may recollect the ceremony to be observed on such an occasion; but if their memories fail, we refer them to the beginning of the

second volume. When we first became acquainted with Eleonore, she was an interesting girl; now she had the appearance of womanhood. Her figure was not above the common height, but well shaped: her hair brown, and her eyes blue. During her residence at her lonely château, she had devoted herself to study; but still was a lovely, loveable child of nature, capable of ardent attachment, and sighing for one who felt naught but pity for the sufferings he caused: she was particularly attached to the romantic, and used to wander alone by moon-light, and frequently to the Fountain of Vaucluse.

The night of which we now speak more resembled spring than winter; and Eleonore watched the stream which, issuing from the basin, leaped from stone to stone, apparently in colour celestial blue. She gazed on the scaly beauties which were endeavouring to force their way against the rapid current: she envied their innocent pleasures,—their tranquil existence: she recollected some lines written by him she loved, and which she had transformed into a song. Her voice was

clear and well modulated, and the stillness of the night made every word audible; but none appeared to listen to her tale.

"Myself, my life, they are most dreary:
My tears—they ne'er can cease to flow:
But still of love I am not weary:
No, still for thee love's passions glow.

"Oh, lay me in the cold, cold tomb:
On the dark stone engrave thy name:
There let the earth its dust resume,
And Heaven my soul, its gift, reclaim."

A full rich voice replied in a kind of recitative:—

"He who ne'er gazed on brilliant stars like those,
Which, rich in lustre, still with mildness shine,—
Beauty ne'er saw, nor sweet expression knows,—
On earth in vain may look for charms divine.

"He who ne'er listen'd to the tender sighs,
Nor heard her voice of modulation pure,
Nor saw her smile, where Cupid ambush'd lies,—
Knows not how love can wound, how love can cure."

Eleonore started from the rock on which she sat, and endeavoured to fly from the secluded spot: in her haste her foot slipped, and she fell

into the Fountain of Vaucluse. Fortunately for her existence, the waters were tranquil, and the unknown reciter heard the plunge, and flew to assist: the coldness of the water, and the fright occasioned by the fall, had deprived Eleonore of vital sensation; and when returning life enabled her to discover where she was, the chamber, the bed, the figures before her, reminded her of the dream in Santa Clara's convent, and the fair round-featured young man had gray hair. He himself writes, that before twenty-five years of age his hair was gray, and consoles himself with thinking that Cæsar and Virgil were so also in youth. The old attendant retired, and Eleonore with difficulty expressed her gratitude.

"I was fearful," said Petrarch, "that the spark of life was extinct: the cold of the water is intense; and your dress could scarcely be torn off by the two old persons who inhabit this dwelling. It is but seldom that I visit the fountain at night; but when I do, I am accustomed to leave my couch, and wander through these wilds. I fear my old followers are too poor to offer even a cup of wine."

After a pause, Eleonore said:—" Under what extraordinary circumstances have we again met! I had almost forgotten what I now fully remember." She related her dream; and Petrarch, in watching her countenance during the recital, perceived that the fair being he had saved from destruction was more than commonly blessed with those charms which captivate youth; and the unrelenting Laura was forgotten for a moment in admiration of the languid but happy Eleonore. The attentions of Petrarch were, after the manner of his pleadings, Platonic; and though he subsequently fell into error, he had at present the firmness to persevere in the same line of honor he formerly adopted in the garden of the château. " Eleonore," thought he, " is beneath my roof, and therefore requires my protection—she is tenderly attached to me, is unfortunate, and therefore should be assured of it. I will not cast a blemish on her unspotted character: her station in life, her fortune, would demand the reparation which a man ought to give where he has erred; but which I cannot give, having devoted myself to the church." These and similar sentiments passed through Petrarch's mind, and

were the safeguards of the slumbering Eleonore. While she slept, Petrarch regarded her finely-formed features; and, kissing her pallid forehead, commended her to the protection of Heaven, and hastily departed for Avignon; not, however, without feeling a growing regard, and an increasing pity, for the interesting woman he had quitted.

CHAP. LXIX.

A SURPRISE.

PETRARCH determined to conceal the adventure of the fountain, and returned to the house of the Cardinal Colonna with much more tranquil feelings towards Laura. He had never yet been admitted into her house; therefore a reduction of the number of visits (one of the points upon which ladies sometimes become alarmed,) could not be manifest. Accidental meetings at the Maison de Cominges, or other houses, were apparently the only means Love afforded of feeding the flame he had created;—but in the suburbs of some cities

there are houses which have gardens, and some of those gardens have bowers. In France, particularly, the persons erecting bowers, or pavilions, place them so as to occupy flanking positions, either for the sake of seeing who passes, or receiving those who pass and who wish to visit; or for the purpose of having what is called in England, where such buildings are also to be seen, "a good view of the road."

Whenever the evening was fine, Laura felt an inclination for fresh air, and she was fond of music: there was now plenty of the former, but none of the latter. Laura wondered at the change, yet feared to inquire of her friend Cecile where her lover was. By means of that useful and intelligent person, whom English people call a lady's maid, it appeared that Petrarch passed much of his time in retirement: Laura imagined that he was composing a poem which would immortalize her, and so was contented.

"It is some weeks," said Cecile one day to Lorenzo, "since I have heard from Eleonore; and her old castle is so dreary, that it damps my spirits:

formerly it appeared passable; but when we visited it latterly, we all agreed that it was the most dismal of dismal places. I really feel interested in that poor languishing child of sighs and tears, and I think your spirits will animate her: to-morrow I will visit the château, and will accept the Count Lorenzo for an escort."

On their arrival, they found that Eleonore was taking her ride. "Well," said Cecile, "we will not lose our trouble: we will await her return." They strolled through the house, and were full of astonishment: they entered the gardens, and were still more surprised. Between the flower-garden and a small bosquet, there had been originally a high wall, which was now thrown down; and workmen were employed in making walks with the rubbish. The day was mild, and Cecile and Lorenzo sauntered about, pleased with the odour of the flowers and the beauty of the various tints of the fresh-bursting leaves. They talked of Eleonore, of Petrarch, of Laura, of Aurélie, of Matilde, and of Reginald: the first they pitied, the second they laughed at, the third they abused, the fourth they loved, the fifth they praised:—

"You must say nothing, madame," remarked Lorenzo, "against Prince Reginald: he is my patron, and has always treated me with kindness—with generosity."

"I assure you," replied the lady, "that I love him too well to speak aught but good of him: Reginald has behaved like a prince to me; and had I been a queen, he could not have treated me with more respect. He seems devoted to his wife, and I am not surprised at his love or devotion to so noble a creature: but it appears to me, that his attachment to her has absorbed his thirst for military glory."

"That passion has, for the present, subsided in the tranquillity of peace, the suavity of domestic bliss, and the anxiety for historical and literary information; but should the trumpet of war sound in his ears, then will the sword of Sir Reginald leap from its scabbard, and his war-horse snort and plunge at the well-known sounds."

"Well said, Lorenzo! but you are my cavalier, and I desire that you will amuse me as much as you can: let them, if they please, imagine you to be a favored lover; while I know that the suspi-

cion is unjust, I can laugh at the folly. Prince Reginald's wife must be like Cæsar's, not only free from stain, but from suspicion; but as for me, let them suspect as much as they please; the Archbishop is not Cæsar, and I am not his wife."

They returned to the castle in the evening, and the expected mistress joined them. "Can this be Eleonore?" exclaimed Cecile: "where is the dark gray habit that spoke the wearer to be either widow or nun? What! changed to a rich brown, lined and trimmed with furs; and a riding-cap of the same material, embroidered with gold, and attached by a long gold chain to the shoulder?"

If Matilde had seen Eleonore leap from her horse and run to embrace Cecile, she would have ceased to pity her as the representative of "Patience on a monument." We have already spoken of the astonishment which the visitors manifested at the change in the appearance of the castle and domestics: the furniture which had been laid by as unnecessary ornaments to the jaundiced eye of a heart-sick inhabitant, had been replaced; and some articles of luxury added. "Since I have visited

the château, it seems transformed by the hands of a magician! Reginald's page, Lucius, must have been at work. The guard-room, the hall, and the anti-chamber, remain in the same homely style of usefulness in which I left them; but the rest is superb."

"I have only," answered the hostess, "replaced the furniture, and put up new draperies. A life of quiet, retirement, and economy has filled my purse: with my savings I have added to my garden, and made some purchases. They are, it is true, finer than I should myself have chosen: but if these things surprise you, Cecile! I have a treat in store. You remember the tower adjoining this chamber?"

"Yes, your study, which I used to call the cave of Trophonius; out of which I always walked backwards, looking as pale and dejected as if I had consulted that celebrated demi-god who built the temple of Apollo at Delphi." With an air of triumph, Eleonore threw back a door of chestnut-wood richly carved, which had been newly scraped and polished; and they entered the cave, for so it

was still called. The tower was of octangular shape, and the ceiling arched and richly ornamented: it had formerly been intended for a private chapel, or oratory, and the painted windows were originally altogether of stained glass. The coloured glass, which remained, was used in the upper part of the newly-sashed window; whilst the lower division was filled with glass of clear white, so that the objects both exterior and interior might be viewed through it. The chimney was of a curious Gothic character, and seemed originally to have been the front of an altar or a tomb. The tables, chairs, and couches, corresponded with the room: there were large carved tripods to support lamps; and two small frames, with shelves of curious workmanship, filled with a selection of manuscripts, some richly covered with velvet. There were also some curious pictures in fresco. The curtains were of gold-coloured cloth, and helped to relieve what would otherwise have appeared somewhat sombre, though not cave-like.

"I congratulate you, my dear Ellesmere!" on

the unexpected change, both in yourself and your house: for one night at least, I will be an inmate of this cheerful residence."

Cecile proceeded in her praises of every thing about her; and after an agreeable evening, prepared, with Eleonore, to retire to their chambers. "Before we separate," exclaimed she, "do gratify my curiosity; for I am absolutely dying to know the cause of all I see! I cannot account for your happiness but in one way, and even that seems almost unaccountable."

"Be satisfied, Cecile, that your friend is happy!—she has again seen the man whom she loves."

"I thought it must be something about love: but have you only seen him?"

"I have spoken to him, and ——"

"You may confide in me, Eleonore!—Once we knew each other's secrets."

"Yes, Cecile! and now hear mine. My dream has been realised." The story was then related, and Eleonore concluded by saying, that she was all gratitude for her preserver.

"And did not the preserver take advantage of this gratitude?"

"He talked of I don't know what!—human frailties, and human passions: praised my personal charms; said something about respect and love: I am afraid I thought only of the latter, and might have been willing to say—

> 'Accept the love that long has lived for thee;
> Accept the heart of faithful purity:
> 'Tis not the love of thousands I would share:
> If there be faith, thou 'lt ever be my care.'"

"But how did it all end?"

"Why, my lover left me to sleep and dream of him: but I expect he will come to me; and as I have broken the ice, perhaps I may thaw the circle that guards his heart."

"It is, I think, a hopeless case; and if he had left me as he did you, I would never think of him more. Take my advice, and listen to Lorenzo."

CHAP. LXX.

ITALY.

In the morning, Eleonore and her two visitors rode to Vaucluse. From the fountain they walked to the château of the Bishop of Cavaillon, which, as before described, stands on a rock above the stream. Having passed the rivulet, they followed the winding path which led to the cottage in which the old servant of Petrarch resided. The woman, whose wrinkled and thin visage bespoke age and abstemiousness, was laboring in the garden: she came to the wicket; and fumbling in her pocket, produced a paper parcel. "Here, lady!" said she, "is a chain: they tell me it is of pure gold: a lad who lives hard by found it at the fountain: my good man thinks you must have dropped it on the evening when our young ——"

"Thank you, and the finder too," replied Eleonore: "pray take this purse, reward the youth for his honesty, and divide the remainder with your good man."

"No, lady!" was the rejoinder, "we must touch none of your money: our master would not be pleased if we robbed you of it: I will give one of the small pieces to the lad, to encourage him in his good conduct. There is the purse: you know better how to use it than we do." Eleonore felt relieved as they ascended the hill, and lost sight of the cottage.

"What tell-tale things," observed Cecile, smiling, "are chains and bracelets!—but Lorenzo did not hear, so all is well."

Reginald and Petrarch happened to be on a visit to the Bishop, who received his guests with politeness. The conversation chiefly consisted of remarks upon the romantic situation and grandeur of the prospect. Lorenzo gazed on Eleonore, and Eleonore on Petrarch.

The visitors retired much pleased with the manners of the worthy prelate, and accepted an invitation to pass the evening at the Château de l'Isle. Petrarch was solicited to recite, and we give the following as an imitation:—

"My Italy! though vain the attempt may be
Of mortal griefs and wounds to speak to thee,
Yet it may soothe my never-dying pain
Those griefs to speak in sympathetic strain.—
Ruler of Heaven! I must thee implore,
Out of the fulness of thy mercy's store,—
That gracious mercy, which to earth did bring
The only Son of Heaven's eternal King,—
Some balmy drops of peace on those sad wounds to shower.
See, gracious Lord! how slight has been the cause
For barbarous hands to break through Nature's laws.
Open, O Father! the obdurate heart
Which Mars has seal'd and closed;—let me impart,
All humble as I am, thy truth, thy charity, and power."

It is not possible to convey the force of the original. There was a fire in the poet's eye, an imagery in his verse, a force in his diction, and an energy in his pronunciation, beyond the art of the translator; and he who would coldly and literally render Petrarch's effusions, cannot feel them.

"Proceed, my friend!" said Reginald: "you are in the vein: it may not be often again that I shall have the pleasure of hearing you." All joined in the demand. "My verses," replied Petrarch,

" merit not such distinction; you do me too much honor."

" Signor Petrarca must not read his merits with his own eyes, but let those who admire judge for him." Eleonore almost turned away her head while she uttered this sentence: Petrarch looked his thanks, and proceeded :—

" Ye, in whose hands the ruling Fates have placed
This country's reins, by every beauty graced;—
A land, for which you no compassion feel,—
Why see we here the barbarous stranger's steel?
Why is the verdant earth with blood bestain'd?
Ye are deceived, and walk in darkness grain'd.
Who seek in venal breasts for love or faith?
They who their lands defend with hireling swords
Around them draw a crowd of barbarous hordes;
A deluge, gather'd on a foreign strand,
To inundate our plains with sweeping hand.
Would that ourselves were saved the cruel deed!
Who shall escape? How shall our lands be freed
From treachery, rapine, anarchy, and death?"

The applause which followed this spirited declamation was most gratifying to Eleonore, and by no means disagreeable to the poet.

CHAP. LXXI.

THE GROTTO OF VAUCLUSE.

"WHAT hopes of success have you, Lorenzo?" said Reginald, as they rode together to Villeneuve: "the heart of Eleonore seems softened, but I do not think much of that softness is lavished on you: she speaks kindly to all,—to me equally as to you; but perhaps that is her prudery."

"She is no prude," answered Lorenzo; "but I fear she loves another as strongly as ever; and I also fear that other loves her a little more than formerly: however, he has declared in my presence that he will not marry, and I have too good an opinion of her to imagine that, without such a hope, Eleonore would think of love."

"You seem to have become a moralist, Lorenzo!"

"All men change with their fortunes: I am now the representative of the ancient house of Sturmzein, and the modern one of Lunheim: I

have a large estate; and am determined to live as a nobleman ought to do, and think no more of such people as Claudine or Julia Franceschi."

"You have my best wishes; and, if a good sword and a strong arm could cut through the knot that ties up Eleonore's heart-strings, no one would have a better chance; but poetry wounds a woman's bosom more keenly than martial fame. I know not how to deal with such a piece of still life as Eleonore; but I have had little practice in female hearts."

"If I could win them as easily, my Prince! I should be a happy man; but knowing my deficiency, I never soared highly. Raymond de Valence counts some twenty among his slaves, and now he is himself enslaved by no less powerful a fairy than the Rosebud of Vienne. It is very droll that a warrior first, and a coxcomb second, should fancy that little thing; but there is no accounting for tastes."

"In choice of women, men are guided by the object they have in view;—for an inspirer to martial deeds, or for a companion in a bower;—for a

heroine, or a manager of household arrangements; —for a court belle, or a devotee;—all have their different qualifications; and men, as their humours take them, have their different tastes: but we promised to visit the Vicomtesse de Turenne."

At the Maison de Cominges they found Madame de Sade: the conversation turned upon the charms of retirement, the influence of wealth in adding to the enjoyments of life, and on the pleasures of undisturbed intercourse with those we love. Laura, out of pique or coquetry, expressed her delight at the renewed intimacy between Petrarch and Eleonore, and her joy at his again visiting her château.

"My dear Madame de Turenne," said she, "must agree with me in thinking it a most desirable connexion: La Comtesse is very rich, very pretty, and very much in love: I pity her most sincerely."

"Why pity her," exclaimed Cecile, "if her passion is returned?"

"Because Petrarch has devoted himself to the

service of the church, though he still refuses holy orders: pray, Madame, advise him to be more worldly in his views."

"I will follow your wishes; and, be assured, if Petrarch consents, Eleonore will allow him to follow his literary pursuits as peaceably as if he were wedded to the church itself: she would make the best of wives."

"I have no doubt of it; she is a very amiable young woman." We are not quite sure that in those days an *amiable* meant a "*good* sort of woman:" at all events, Madame de Sade went away discomposed;—she was jealous. Laura knew how to manage her lover, but not how to contend with Cecile, to whom Lorenzo said, "You are rather too strong for the prude; but you must not injure me for the pleasure of piquing her: you know that I came here purposely to animate the statue with drum and trumpet, and carry off my prize in triumph."

"Vote her a Sabine, and you 'll succeed," replied Cecile, laughing.

Laura remained an angel; Petrarch became

daily more enamoured, and more impatient: one day he would vow never to see Laura more; another, he would swear to die at her feet; and she would listen to these protestations in that place which is now called Madame Laura's house. One day he would fly to the château, and receive homage from its fair owner; and another, hasten to the solitude of Vaucluse, and compose odes on Liberty.

Laura occasionally visited the Bishop of Cavaillon, to taste the pure air; and her husband accompanied her to enjoy the pleasures of conversation. While Monsieur de Sade talked politics or theology, Madame became romantic; and, as some writers assert, took delight in strolling to a grotto not far distant, which she had discovered in one of her lonely walks. A reverend author* says: —

> "Une grotte écartée avoit frappé mes yeux,
> Grotte sombre, dis-moi, si tu les vis heureux:
> M'écria-je—Un vieux tronc bordoit-il le rivage?
> Laure avoit reposé sur son antique bordage."

* Jardin, Chant 3.

A fair authoress adventures even further than the Abbé:—

"Dans cet antre profond, où, sans d'autres témoins
Laure sut par de tendres soins
De l'amoureux Petrarque adoucir le martyre;
Dans cet antre où l'amour tant de fois fut vainqueur,
Il exprima si bien sa peine, son ardeur,
Que Laure, malgré sa rigueur,
L'écouta, plaignit sa langueur,
Et fit peut-être plus *encore*."

Thus this famous grotto, which certainly is not easily found, has been made a formidable engine in attacking the character of the cold prude; but no feminine character should be assailed where there is not just reason to think a liability to error existed. Laura did meet Petrarch, according to his own confessions; but, though they might have passed minutes, even hours in the grotto, it does not follow of necessity that their meeting was not Platonic; nor would it be surprising that Laura, as a daughter of Eve, was a little curious to hear what new words could be used on so old a subject as love.

It happened that, in one of those days on which

lovers like to meet,—namely, a fine day with an inspiring sun, — Eleonore strolled towards the fountain ; and, as Reginald was preparing to leave Avignon, Lorenzo could not depart without one tender scene. He was directed towards the grot, and there heard persons in discourse ; and, as the subject was love, his youthful curiosity led him to become a listener. We will not,—we cannot praise the act ; but we will add that a lady also was in the same inexcusable predicament. After vehement declarations of passion, there were touches of jealousy, and a certain rich widow was spoken of : the answer was too decisive to be misunderstood ; and Eleonore, who was the female listener, fell to the ground from her concealment, whilst Lorenzo rushed to her aid. The persons conversing in the grotto, hearing sounds of interruption, abruptly retired. "This," exclaimed Lorenzo, "shall be the crisis of my fate. Eleonore! I too have heard—but let it pass like the idle wind, which I regard not!—I long have loved, and even now seek you. Fortune has made me equal to yourself, and you cannot suspect me of

mean motives in pleading my passion: as for that enthusiast, Petrarch, he knows not what he says. Lean on me—confide in me—and let me conduct you to your peaceful home, where I must say, adieu! for my Prince sets out this evening for Paris. They say he is restored to the royal favor: Heaven grant it be so! and may the same divine influence place me in thine!" Lorenzo knelt;—Eleonore blushed. "The scene I have witnessed to-day," said she, at length, "has cured me of my folly; and I have wakened from a dream, under the influence of which I have too long labored, and whose visions the light of truth has now dispelled. I will be ingenuous; I have long been sensible of your attentions; and, believing them founded on a solid basis, would not encourage them, not being myself heart-free: from this moment I am another being. Do not accompany the Prince to Paris!" Lorenzo willingly promised to obey.

CHAP. LXXII.

A DISPENSATION.

PRINCE REGINALD was in the act of mounting his horse, when the Archbishop of Rouen was announced. He was the bearer of a conciliatory message from Philippe, who expressed great regret at Reginald's having so unfavorably considered his conduct, which, after all, he intended only as an act of friendship. "He wishes to see you in Paris," continued the Archbishop, "to confer in person relative to an embassy to England."

"It is strange," replied our hero, "that Philippe, who is in general an able monarch, should now appear so weak a man: at one moment he insults, and at the next he soothes. Why, think you, sends he for me?"

"Possibly, on his crusading projects: he appears now as zealous as was your mad-headed Cœur-de-Lion. You are young, and Edward is young; and they do say that your young heads

would do more for the two countries in two hours, than the old lords of the council in as many years."

"You flatter, Monseigneur!"

"No, Pierre Roger never flatters: to horse, and try! But stay! I have a letter to you from the Primate: here it is: read!"

The contents of the Primate's epistle were as follows:—"You are aware, my beloved friend! that by the death of De Lunheim, Angelina is free to choose another husband. My happiness depends on her; and although there is at present a bar to that happiness, it can be removed. My spiritual power gives me no pleasure; and my temporal sway is fast decaying. Offers have been made, on the part of the Dauphin, which will enable me to resume my situation as Prince de Rougemont,—more especially as my estates have been carefully managed, and, by the savings during my primacy, are now well established. I have a relation, Thebaud de Rougemont, a worthy member of the church, and who is possessed of considerable wealth: I have determined to resign in his favor; and he has agreed, in a manner satisfactory to us

both, to remunerate me for some large but necessary expenses, on getting possession of the archbishopric. My successor is determined to abandon all military grandeur: thus his expenses will be reduced, and the people will be satisfied. Nothing is wanting to complete my felicity, but a dispensation from his Holiness. There are enough of precedents in the case: many high dignitaries, nay, Cardinals, have been released from their vows, and mine especially were taken under constraint. Angelina de Roussigné is more dear to me than ever; and with our united fortunes, we shall be enabled to maintain our station in life. The Archbishop will intercede in my favor with his Holiness," &c. &c.

"LE PRINCE DE ROUGEMONT."

Reginald and the Archbishop hastened to the palace: the dispensation was obtained, and Reginald was the bearer to De Rougemont of the Pope's release from holy vows, in order to enable that Prince to take the cross. Lorenzo was permitted to sigh or carol in the bowers of love, until

Hymen called him to Vienne. Matilde received her husband with more than usual joy, but would not inquire how he had passed his time, lest there might appear a spark of jealousy in the questioning. When Reginald related the change in Lorenzo's fortunes, all seemed astonished, and all were overjoyed. In a short time, Albert and Angelina retired, to converse on their prospects of happiness; Reginald and Matilde to whisper soft nonsense, for marriage does not always render people dead to such enjoyment; Agenor and Aurélie to make preparations for the wedding, and to invite Eleonore to their castle.

Thus, by chance, Raymond de Valence found himself alone with Rosalie. "Your mother," said he, "is about to try the effects of a second marriage; your friend the recluse has thoughts of making the same experiment: why should you alone be hard-hearted?"

"My heart, Raymond," answered Rosalie, "is not hard; but my lot is different from theirs: their former marriages were forced, mine was optional."

"And what did you gain for your devotion and love? you were left to pine in solitude, while your ——"

"Count Rodolphe is dead: he was my husband, and the father of my child. His pursuits and pleasures did not accord with mine; and he indulged in society more agreeable to him. But all such deeds are no longer thought of, while his kind acts live in my memory: when next we converse, I pray you not to make such allusions."

CHAP. LXXIII.

THE SEVEN STARS.

On his arrival at Paris, Reginald was summoned before the King. "For the last time, Marquis of Montserrent," exclaimed Philippe, "we see you in this chamber. I had hoped we might, and indeed I did, acquit you of actions injurious to ourselves and degrading to you."

"Degrading, sire?"

"Yes; is it no degradation to hold converse

with a traitor? nay, more, to offer him shelter and protection in a foreign court? but that is not all! know you this hand?"

"Yes, sire! it is the writing of Robert of Artois."

"You know it well, it seems: hear the contents:—'The same hand that put a crown on the head of Le Roi trouvé, can remove it.' Is not that traitorous language?"

"Undoubtedly, in a subject it would be; but in a banished man, it is but the ravings of revenge."

"And to whom addressed? To the Prince Reginald!" There is also a letter of yours extant, which speaks somewhat boldly, for a subject. 'Be assured, while Robert d'Artois remains in banishment, I will not draw a sword for him who has robbed France of its brightest ornament; and sooner than touch the cross, I would have my right hand lopped off.' These letters were enveloped and sent to me by an unknown hand, whose mark of signature is seven stars."

"Those letters, sire! are not forged: as far as I

am concerned they speak my feelings, and I could even add more."

"Begone! and never again presume to approach within fifty miles of our royal person. Upholder of treason, if not thyself traitor, begone!"

"It is fortunate for thee, Philippe of France, that I respect myself too much to punish this insult offered by one whose head has been anointed with the sacred oil. That saves you now, bareheaded as you are; but if we meet again in hostile array, let thy casque defend thee, if it can!" As Reginald turned towards the portal, a rustling sound attracted his notice. The King started:—"We are betrayed," cried he: "our royal secrets are divulged, our person perhaps menaced."

"Fear no danger, sire," exclaimed De Vavasour, "while Reginald is near you." He drew his sword, and sprang towards a heavy curtain that divided the chamber, and behind which was placed the King's day-bed. By touching a spring, the King gave the alarm, and four halberdiers of the guard rushed in. "Search the chamber thoroughly," exclaimed his Highness; "there is treachery on

foot." The guards finding Reginald with his sword drawn, called out to him to surrender as their prisoner. "By whose orders," demanded he, "dare you thus address me?"

"By the King's," was the reply.

"'Tis false, caitiffs!" cried the monarch: "Philippe commanded you to aid this knight, not to molest him." Reginald sheathed his sword, and passing through the chamber, made a low obeisance, which the King formally returned.

Some officers of the court crowded round our hero, to inquire the cause of the alarm,—for by this time the guards were assembled. "The King," replied Reginald, "said, that he imagined there was some one concealed in his apartment." Many other questions were asked, and salutations returned, by old friends and acquaintances, among others the Count d'Eu. "Have you heard any thing of Robert d'Artois?" inquired that nobleman. "They say he is in arms in Guienne: if so, my sword, which rusts in its scabbard in dull idleness, will again see the light. Men say that, in such a case, you and I, Prince, will look each

other in the face." Reginald smiled as he took the outstretched hand of the brave soldier, and passed on: to his surprise he found that his horses and servants had been dismissed.

Wrapping himself in his cloak, (for the wind blew keenly,) he took the way to the quarter in which he dwelt. As he passed over the Seine, the moon gave a momentary gleam of light. He saw facing him a wrinkled hand held up, and heard a hollow voice say "Beware!" He looked in the direction to which the figure pointed, and at the moment an arrow grazed his arm, and fixed the body of his preserver against the barrier of the bridge. Reginald sprang to the spot whence the arrow must have been shot. The moon was eclipsed by a passing cloud: he heard a heavy fall in the water. Reginald now hastened towards the wounded person who so kindly had warned him. Having cut off the point, which was deeply fixed in the wood, he released the unfortunate, who proved to be Ursula. "What brought you into this danger, and to what place of safety shall I remove you?"

"I came to save you," was the reply: "carry me to the third house on the right, facing the river. Beware of the seventh star!"

By the direction given, Reginald found an ancient Gothic building, seemingly untenanted; he rang the heavy bell, and the portal creaked on its hinges. He bore the bleeding damsel towards a lamp, which burnt over an oaken table in the middle of the hall: she was dead. He now felt a light touch upon his shoulder; and turning, saw a youthful sylph, who taking him gently by the hand, pushed back a door, and they entered a low apartment lighted only by a fire. "Is it you, Ursula?" demanded a voice within. "Alas, Ursula cannot answer you, father Aristobulus!" said the girl.

"Thank the stars! Sir Reginald," ejaculated Aristobulus, "you are safe; Ursula has then saved you. Help me up, Florella! now you may go." After a pause, Aristobulus continued:—"I have not many hours to live; I am about to confess my sins, but I hate priests, and will now confess to you, who are noble and brave, and, what is even better, honest. I have lived a life of wickedness: death

prevents me from consummating an act of villany, and saves that poor child from infamy. By means unknown to me, King Robert learned the secrets of my wicked life: he has taken an Egyptian as his oracle; has banished me, and confiscated my property: he is a good man, and will restore it to Florella, to whom I bequeathe it. I owe her some reparation for my guilty intentions. Alathæa is rich enough: she lives like a queen;—but my words are numbered!—She was a fine creature, when I first exhibited her in the mysteries of ——"

"Before the priest arrives, tell me if Theodric is concerned with the seven stars."

"Yes, his fate hangs on them."

"Was he my secret enemy with King Philippe?"

"Ask Ursula!"

"Ursula cannot answer; the assassin's arm has pierced her body, instead of mine."

"Bring the body hither." This being done, he continued:—"By the stars, it was a potent arm that shot this shaft! mail would not have saved her. Look at that withered form:—there, in those

sallow cheeks and disfigured features, trace, if you can, the beauty which first enticed me into the paths of vice. Sickened of her charms, I gave Ursula in marriage to Ethelred: he must now protect you against Theodric, if he can."

Florella's voice announced that the priest was come. The friar entered, but Aristobulus turned away, and called for wine. Florella handed a goblet, the contents of which he swallowed. "By the wand of Merlin!" exclaimed he, "it is the sleeping draught intended for —— Well, it will soothe the pain I feel! Shades of the departed, get ye from my sight! forgive me, Ursula! stay, demons! drag me not yet! I see the flames! Medora, stab me not! Florella lives, — away, ye monsters!" Aristobulus started up, looked wildly round:— "Beware of the seventh star!" shouted he to Reginald; then fell back, and spoke no more.

CHAP. LXXIV.

DOMESTIC HAPPINESS.

FROM this scene of horror, Reginald removed Florella to the palace in which he dwelt. Confiding her to the care of Patience Hawkwood, he ordered Sir George to await him in his closet, and then entered the chamber of Matilde. "Heavens, my Reginald!" exclaimed she, "you are covered with blood!"

"It is that of the person who saved my life," replied her husband. He then related all that had happened. Matilde summoned Patience, whom she ordered to bring in Florella. "Heaven has saved you," said the Countess, "from ruin: the draught Aristobulus took was meant for you,—not for your death, but to accomplish his wicked purposes. Offer up your thanks on your bended knees."

"I know not how to pray, lady!" said the unhappy child. Reginald silently and reverently prayed for the continuance of that protection ma-

nifested towards them; and, with gratitude for the past and hope for the future, retired to give his instructions for the burial of the wicked, but now punished pair. Hawkwood took with him two of the German guard, intending to hire a conveyance, and take the bodies to the forest of Vincennes, and there to inter them, for he well knew they would not be allowed Christian burial. The Germans advised a better method: the Seine rolled at their feet; the night was tempestuous; no person was near: they wrapped the bodies in a large military cloak, and, placing within it some heavy bars of iron, committed the carcases to the deep, and with them the vellum which contained the secrets of Aristobulus, and which was always wrapped round his body.

After a restless night, Reginald thus addressed Matilde:—"The King has banished me from his presence: whither shall we go?"

"Let us to England."

"No, Matilde! not in the hour of passion, and with the feeling of vengeance."

"Let us then hasten to Roussillon, where, in

witnessing the happiness of those we love, we will endeavour to forget our own griefs."

"I do not grieve for the lost favor of such a King, but I grieve to think that the man who called me traitor lives."

"Remember, that it was no common person who so spoke: it was a crowned monarch."

"Yes, and the same hands that put that crown on, can again remove it."

"Place the crown on the head of Edward, and he will reward you."

"Edward *shall* be King of France: we will to Guienne: arm and prepare: come, my Matilde!" The lovely Countess smiled at the ardour which glowed in every feature of the noble countenance of her lord. "Let us first to Roussillon," said she: "but poor Florella,—what will you do with her? Is she to be your page, or my attiring-woman?"

"Do with her what you will, Matilde! if woman must be my page, you must be that woman, for I have vowed to cherish none but thee." Orders were given for immediate departure; and, without accident, they arrived at Roussillon. There

they met Petrarch, who having been scorned by Laura for pressing her delicacy, and her half-avowed regard for him, too far, had been banished from her presence: he had therefore determined to travel, in hope of forgetting her.

"Come with me, Lorenzo," said De Vavasour; "I have a secret to confide to you: I shall want your aid, and that of Raymond also."

"You will have none of mine, unless you procure me the hand of Rosalie," said De Valence: "without that I have no power to fight: for I suppose by your looks it is fighting I am wanted for."

"Nor will I go to battle, except as the husband of Eleonore," Lorenzo added. "There's Rosalie!" cried he, and he ran forward with Raymond, but they did not overtake the fugitive. Reginald took another way, and returned with the Countess de Roussigné and Rosalie, who afterwards in silence gave to Raymond her hand, which received a thousand kisses. We need not say any thing about other kisses, more or less:—probably, when opportunity offered, Rosalie, like others in her situation, received her share.

Every thing being arranged, the Prince de Rougemont led Angelina to the altar: De Valence and Rosalie followed; and Lorenzo and Eleonore closed the scene. The ceremony was performed by the Archbishop of Rouen; and never was there a happier party than that assembled at Roussillon. Widows do not think, like maidens, that it is necessary to cry their eyes out because they are married to the man of their heart. All was gaiety, good-humour, and festivity. Thebaud de Rougemont succeeded to the primacy; the promised cession was made to Humbert of Dauphiné; the Prince de Rougemont retained only five hundred guards; the rest enlisted under Reginald, and marched for Agen, which was placed in a state of defence.

Reginald and Matilde now sailed for England; Petrarch accompanied Lorenzo and Eleonore to Flanders and Germany; Raymond and his bride followed the fortunes of Reginald; and the Prince de Rougemont journeyed towards his own estates.

Previously to leaving England, Matilde had made a purchase, of which we will speak here-

after. Philippa received her relatives and their friends with that graciousness and kindness for which she was so famed. The letters they received from Angelina and Eleonore were full of the happiness which each fresh hour bestowed on those deserving ladies. Petrarch wrote of politics, patriotism, and poetry; but not a word of Laura: it was all about Italy and the ancient Romans: the spirits of former times were called forth; and Virginius, Brutus, Cassius, and all the etcetera of popular leaders, made to shout to the assembled people.

CHAP. LXXV.

THE ORDER OF THE BATH.

King Edward had journeyed to the North, for purposes unknown to the court. We shall briefly mention that the nobles of Scotland appeared anxious for the restoration of Baliol, on account of the extreme youth of David Bruce; and that Baliol had landed in the North, and, aided by many

of the English borderers, was now in arms. The house of Percy was daily rising into greatness, and Edward was anxious to ensure not only the services, but the friendship of the valiant lord who owned the fortified Castle of Alnwick.

The arrival of Edward there, was wholly unexpected. Looking at the family around him, the King said,—" Where is young Harry? they tell me he too is gone to aid the Baliol faction!"

" I believe it to be true, sire," answered the Baron.

" It is not well, Lord Percy! it is not well," rejoined Edward. " England is at truce, and should not play a double part: the mask of peace should not cover the sword of war." The trumpets announced a stranger of distinction, and Reginald entered. The King received at his hands the despatch of the Pope. " Well," said his Highness, " we must, I suppose, obey our Holy Father John, and you and I will fight side by side in the Holy Land: but, between ourselves, Reginald! it is a mad exploit. When our sovereigns had turbulent subjects, and no other means

of allowing their humours to evaporate, such religious onsets suited their purpose well enough: but, for me, I am content with Europe, and would leave Asia to the barbarians who possess it. The Saracens have in former times desolated our quarter of the globe; and if we Europeans continue to prove to them the facility of transporting half a million of men into their dominions, they may, in return for the compliment, visit us with double that number. But, my friend, you bring me great news: John has conceded a point relative to our church, which our late ambassador, Richard de Bury, would not essay, and which his Holiness says is granted out of pure regard for you."

"The Pope," replied De Vavasour, "has always been my friend; and I am truly happy you, sire, have gained aught through my means."

"You know my wishes about a certain earldom," observed the King; "but the hour is not yet ripe: we will, however, give to you the decoration of our military order of the Bath,—not that you want any addition to your weight of honors, but that we wish to show our gratitude."

The Lord of Alnwick received his new guest with that hospitality which the house of Percy was well known to possess. The King having ordered the recall of the young Henry, and having visited certain of his fortresses in that part of the country, set off for Belvoir Castle, belonging to Sir Ralph d'Aubeney. This almost royal residence was built in the reign of William the Conqueror: its possessor was a knight of the Bath, and much esteemed by the King. There Reginald received the highest military honor Edward at that time could grant, and the ceremony attracted the notice of the neighbouring population. Reginald wrote a pressing letter to Robert d'Artois, entreating him to repair to England. The letter concluded thus:—"You have been tyrannically treated: Philippe has become master of your secrets. On the continent of Europe you are not safe: here is security—here are honors—here is a just and warlike Prince;—and, remember! the same hands that gave, may remove a crown."

CHAP. LXXVI.

REGIUS ETHELWOLF.

THE Countess Matilde, during the absence of her husband, had remained, together with Rosalie, under the protection of Philippa, whose affection made her desirous to have her cousin with her at Windsor. The smiles of the infant Prince, and its resemblance to its father, were the Queen's consolation for the absence of her adored lord. Matilde envied Philippa her good fortune in giving birth to a son, who might inherit his father's name and glory. In one of her solitary excursions, her palfrey guided her to the spot where stood the Saxon cross. During the winter months, Alathæa had resided, advantageously for herself, as well as agreeably, in London: maids, widows, and wives came to consult her; and the fame of her beauty being reported by some incautious females, (whether to husbands or lovers it matters not for our story,) many lords pleaded a desire to be acquainted

with the future, while they thought only of the present. The fame and the wealth of Alathæa hourly increased: the jewels she sold had been gifts to her: the money was usefully appropriated, and returned fifty-fold:—but even Alathæa had one cause of discontent. She had, as the reader knows, a son, whom she had named Regius, to please herself; and Ethelwolf, to satisfy her husband. This child was destined by Ethelred to tread in the footsteps of his ancestors.

When one of the damsels announced the Princess Matilde, Alathæa, taking her newly-awakened child in her arms, hastened to meet her noble visitor. It was a fine sunny morning, and the beauty of the boy struck Matilde forcibly: there was another cause that contributed to the effect, but it was not named. "Where is Ethelred?" inquired the Countess.

"He is, lady! employed in an affair of some interest."

"I regret his absence, though I do not come to consult him upon the welfare of my husband; we have had satisfactory letters." The boy gamboled

with its mother: Matilde longed for such a plaything. "Would," continued she, "that boy were mine!"

"It is but last night I decided on making an appeal to you, lady! The Saxon has announced his determination that my child shall be trained up in the deluded and deluding path in which he himself walks. I know how favorable is the opinion of the great as to the power of reading destiny in the stars: the world must have some presiding deity, and the firmament may show its miracles; but I know that Ethelred, ay! and Aristobulus himself, use mortal means. Robert of Naples is a good, wise, brave prince; yet he places too much confidence in the judgment and character of one whom I consider as a villain. To that man I attribute my sexual degradation; and if I had not submitted to a marriage with the Saxon, a fathomless dungeon, or the sea, would have been my destiny." The Countess interrupted the agitated Roman:—"Perhaps," said she, "my request to Ethelred, the Saxon, would relieve you from embarrassment, and place that lovely child under our mutual care?"

"My passion for the boy," exclaimed its mother, "makes me hope he will follow a nobler course than that which the rude Saxon designs for him." After a pause, she added,—"If I bear a son to Ethelred, let him devote that infant as he will: but Regius ——"

"Let me demand the boy!"

"No, Princess! I will not suffer such a degradation of your high dignity: the Saxon is proud, and often rude in his replies: I, however, will ask, and I have the means of enforcing the demand, though it may separate us for ever!"

"For mercy's sake, do not use them!—do not let me be the cause of separating man and wife."

"I care not for the consequence: the first wish of my heart is the welfare of Regius: for myself I care not. I am rich, too rich;—but I am not happy! The Saxon treats me like an empress—but I have conversed with the most wise, and, alas! the most wicked of the Romans. Ethelred is unlettered, and unacquainted with the world: my chains are light; but still it is with pain I wear them. For months I am absent from the Saxon, and surrounded by the gay and luxurious

of both sexes: they vote me an oracle, and I laugh at their follies, their questions, and their remarks. Their flatteries amuse me; but there is none among the nobles like —— here comes the Saxon!" Contrary to expectation, Ethelred consented to the proposition of Alathæa; and soon after this interview, the child was removed to a castellated lodge, which we alluded to as the purchase made by Matilde. A messenger announced the return of the King, and every heart in the Castle of Windsor beat with joy: Matilde received her husband with that affection which speaks not half it feels, but which is not therefore the less sincere and warm. In such a case, Cecile would have been all passion: Matilde was all soul. Reginald was anxious to communicate with the Saxon on the subject of Theodric, and therefore took an early opportunity of visiting the forest. No one appeared: he returned towards the castle, and met the little imp Umptikin. From his gestures, the Prince discovered that the Saxon was far from home, but that Alathæa was to be found; and that if he would give him some money, the imp would

conduct him to the spot. The money being given, away flew the dwarf. Reginald was astonished at the fleetness of the little wretch, who took what is called a bird's flight, and Gondibert was obliged to put forth all his powers. At last a strong fence arrested their progress: Umptikin pointed to a gate, received an additional gift, and was out of sight in a moment. Reginald dismounted, and, followed by his faithful friend Gondibert, passed along a narrow road overhung with the branches of various trees: the building was nearly overgrown with woodbine and ivy: the entrance was closed; but a small wicker gate led through a shrubbery to a garden full of flowers.

In a bower formed with great taste, stood the classically beautiful figure of Alathæa, in an attitude of admiration. The object of her contemplation was a lovely boy, whose infantile and graceful movements seemed worthy of the attention they produced. "By my knighthood," exclaimed the visitor, "a very handsome boy!"

"And very like its father, Prince Reginald!" returned Alathæa. There was something peculiar

in her way of expressing this remark, which was meant to convey more than was comprehended by the hearer. "There appears," said he, "to be a fancy in a mother's eye, which makes her believe she sees a resemblance to the person to whom she owes the life of such little enchanters. A child is always an interesting object to its parents, and, if handsome, is admired by all. I acknowledge this infant's beauty; but I cannot see, in the graceful creature, any likeness to the Herculean father."

"Its father is all grace and beauty."

"Manly beauty for the forest, perhaps," remarked De Vavasour, smiling at the lady's apparent change of opinion; "but surely not adapted to the flowing robe of the court."

"All dresses become him." Reginald was more and more surprised at this warm admiration, but concluded with Lorenzo's usual remark, that there is no accounting for taste: to him the Saxon, in a hall of festivity or dance, would be an amusing sight. Before any further explanation could be given, Matilde appeared. She and her husband were mutually surprised at the unexpected meet-

ing. "Tell me, my love!" said she, "how you discovered the retreat."

"Not through the stars, I assure you, my fair questioner! but by the aid of a little personage, who is also prime minister to his Saxon majesty. Now, may I ask my young beauty how she happens to be here?"

"Before our departure, I purchased this fairy spot, and I now make it the residence of my infant."

"Your infant!" exclaimed Reginald: "I am all astonishment!—what mean you?"

"I did not know," replied Matilde, "whether you would approve my mode of procuring such a pleasure; and therefore, until the boy was old enough to interest you, I had determined to keep him in this bower. He is the gift of Alathæa."

"And what says his other parent to such a disposal of his property?"

"The Saxon king," whispered Alathæa, "as you call my husband, gave his consent. The child is yours!" The latter remark was made in so low a tone, that the Countess heard it not.

"What call you the pretty boy?" said the Prince, taking him up in his arms. The child, alarmed at being touched for the first time by a man, screamed aloud; and Reginald, unused to such an occupation as nursing, almost allowed him to leap from his arms. The females, in wishing to save the child from imagined danger, added to the fright; for, seeing them spring towards him, the infant, considering his fears well founded, gave increased exertion to his lungs, which were none of the weakest. When Alathæa removed the boy to a sufficient distance, the tears and cries suddenly ceased, and he clapped his hands and shouted with joy, at thinking himself quite safe. De Vavasour announced his intention of being a guest at his wife's cottage, for the remainder of the day, and desired her to prepare proper entertainment, while he took care of his horse.

"Florella's palfrey may be removed," observed Matilde.

"Gondibert," replied her husband, "has yet too much fire to be a fitting companion for palfreys: but give no heed to it; a knight can take care

of his horse, or, if he cannot, he is not worthy of a good one." A council was now held, as to the possibility of providing proper food for a strong, active, healthy man, with a most unprincely appetite. Reginald was surprised at finding the stable department in such good order: this was owing to Hobson, who had appointed one of his steadiest assistants to take care of the "poor dumb beasts who could not tell their wants!" The bread was declared to be excellent, the butter delicious;—eggs never were so fresh; and the stewed hare superior to the most perfect ragouts of Paris:—so much for hunger and happiness.

When Reginald asked for wine, the page and Florella regarded each other. "We of the Retreat," said Matilde, "drink water."

"But Madge," said the page aside to Florella, "is not a hermit:" and away flew the lad, quickly returning with a bottle of choice Malvoisie. In the evening, the happy pair strolled through the groves which surrounded the Retreat, and their conversation turned on the young protégé. "What call you that boy?" inquired De Vavasour.

"I call him Reginald," replied the Countess. During a short silence, the Prince seemed lost in thought. "Are you unwell, my love?" demanded Matilde.

"No, not unwell, sweet Matilde! but—let us return: I wish to see that child again." Alathæa was gone, and the boy asleep. "We can see him," said Matilde, "without disturbing his slumbers: you must not awake him, or we shall have a more violent screaming than before. The poor child is only accustomed to female faces." Regius slept soundly; his dimpled arms and hands, clasped over his head, displayed the captivation of infantile grace; and Reginald could not refrain from kissing his rosy cheeks. "Would that we were blessed with such a boy!" cried he to his wife: "but Heaven has decreed it otherwise, and we must submit. The name I have gained, the honors I have fought for, must sink in the dust, and De Vavasour be forgotten by the children of men."

CHAP. LXXVII.

THE MERCHANT.

THE summer had already bestowed its tints on the bending harvest: the rustics were employed in gathering into heaps the new-mown grass; the fallow deer were enjoying the varieties of luxuriant vegetation; when Reginald received intelligence that Lorenzo and his bride were safely landed at Southampton. Hawkwood was sent to conduct them to the Retreat, the grounds of which, compared to the flat country near the Château de l'Isle, appeared to great advantage. Regius became the play-fellow of the two ladies, and Reginald and Lorenzo partook of the pleasures of the chase with the King. One evening, as they returned home at a late hour, they met a man in the dress of a merchant, attended by one plainly-dressed follower: they were mounted on Norman horses, and had the air of foreigners. "Whence come you, gentlemen?" said Lorenzo in French.

"From a distant land," was the reply, "to find kindness, if kindness there be in this world."

"If the noble Robert d'Artois live, this is he!" said Reginald, springing from his horse, and flying into the open arms of his banished friend. "Come to my lady's bower," pursued he: "it is but small, but within you will find warm friends and good cheer." Matilde and Eleonore were almost tired of playing with Regius, and Alathæa was standing near them, watching the sport, and wondering why the cavaliers were so long absent,—when the door opened, and three men entered.

Matilde, whose hair was dishevelled, and her robe torn open by the playful romp, was shocked at appearing in such guise before a stranger, and rushed out of the room, followed by Eleonore. Regius clung to Alathæa. "Is this the kindness you taught me to expect?" exclaimed D'Artois: "Is Robert every where shunned? I must order my horses, Sir Reginald! I am still a Prince, though a degraded peer."

"Stay, my friend! I entreat you stay," cried our hero: "this shall be immediately rectified."

De Vavasour flew towards the chamber of his wife, who, almost breathless, was wondering who the stranger could be. "It is Robert d'Artois," said he, "the early protector of your husband; and, were you even without your robe, you should receive him as one to whom all honor, all affection, from us is due."

"Such a reception, Reginald!" replied the lady, "might be affectionate, but would not evince due honor either to him or to you:—but if I must go in this guise, you must bear the blame. Come, Eleonore! let us face this redoubtable warrior. With two knights by our sides," continued she, as they approached the hall, "we need not fear one man."

"From me, Princess, you can have nothing to fear!" and Robert bent to kiss the extended hand; but Matilde raised him, and taking both his within her own, offered her cheek. "You are the friend of my husband," said she: "his friends are mine: we have but one heart, and, with his, you have that of Matilde!"

When Lorenzo, Eleonore, and Matilde had re-

spectively retired, Robert thus spoke to our hero: —"De Vavasour, you once loved me: if that love still continue, you must commiserate my sufferings: but it is not pity I seek, but revenge. Philippe must pay the penalty of his ingratitude."

"For thy sake, my friend," returned Reginald, "I have been degraded from my station, and banished the French court."

"This looks well: wear we not swords? Does not Edward, son of Isabel, live? this looks well! have you friends?"

"Lorenzo is devoted to my service, and is a German noble. The gallant Raymond de Valence ——"

"I do not want their names or characters; the single word *friend* comprises all: degraded and insulted as I am, I too have friends! but my mind wanders: no wonder, Reginald! for my sufferings have been great: my wife and children!—separated —separated too from each other! My sister, on the false pretext of licentious conduct, has been imprisoned by her own son. Let him look to it!

but it is to please Philippe! licentious conduct! the chaste, the pious —— but let him look to it!" Wishing to turn the current of his thoughts, Reginald said, "You must be presented to the King: where is your baggage?"

"Until I have seen the King, I remain a merchant of Havre-de-Grace." At times Robert gave way to his anger, and at times lamented the hard fate of his relatives and friends. Reginald tried to soothe the fury of his injured friend, and to impress upon him that lamentation was in vain; but his endeavours were ineffectual: he therefore proposed to retire, and led the way to the chamber that had been hastily prepared for the Count, where he wished his friend a good night's repose.

In the seclusion of his apartment, De Vavasour thus expressed his thoughts: "A weight hangs over me; my dreams have pointed out such a figure as that which Robert appeared to my view, and near him stalked a knight of lofty bearing and severe aspect. Aristobulus informed me that Robert d'Artois is connected with the fortunes both of England and France. I have sought Ethelred

in vain." His thoughts were interrupted by the entrance of Matilde, who, wondering at his unusual absence from his couch, became uneasy, and sought the object of her affections, whom she found pacing up and down the chamber. The presence of his beloved wife banished the thoughts which the arrival of Robert had created, and the prospects of the future were forgotten in present happiness.

In the morning Reginald rode with Robert to Windsor, and was admitted into the presence of the King. The banished Prince having been presented, Edward embraced him. "What think you now of our right to the throne of France?" said his Highness.

"The crown of France, Lord Edward," answered d'Artois, "was gained by words; it must now be won by blows."

"Shall we prepare for instant war? we have troops at our command intended for Ireland."

"Lord Edward," rejoined Robert,

> 'He, who France would bravely win,
> Must with old Scotland first begin.'"

"Scotland! Scotland!" exclaimed the monarch: "that is a thorn in the side of England: my grandfather broke the point, but did not tear out the root. Scotland!"

"Yes, sire, *I* sent the Baliol thither to pave *your* way. The road has been trodden by your nobles; and where a peer can walk, a King may march!"

"True, Prince Robert, true!"

CHAP. LXXVIII.

HALIDON.

EDWARD and Robert were continually closeted together, and it seemed evident to Reginald that the former would attack Scotland: the confinement of the Queen at Woodstock, where she gave birth to a daughter, for a while restrained Edward's warlike ardour.

David Bruce, in despite of Baliol's successes, still retained the sceptre, and the English monarch demanded from him the restitution of Berwick,

and that he should do homage for his crown. To this David replied, with becoming spirit, that his father, Robert, had won Berwick in open war, and that he himself would keep it; adding, that having taken to his bosom a sister of the King of England, that monarch was bound to espouse his cause. Edward assembled his parliament, and his subjects counselled war: this was the favorite theme of Robert d'Artois; and Reginald was ready for the field, having collected under his banner a body of knights of approved conduct. Edward moved with a large army towards Berwick, and Reginald escorted Philippa to the castle of Bamborough. In order to make Edward raise the siege, a powerful body of Scots moved towards the castle; but the King, knowing the strength of that place, and the proved skill and courage of De Vavasour, persisted in his efforts against Berwick, without reducing his force by a single knight. The siege of Bamborough continued only for six days, during which the Scots ravaged the whole country: De Vavasour at length received a reinforcement under Raymond de Valence: with a strong body he sallied forth, and,

falling on the Scots employed in pillage, he slaughtered them almost without resistance. On his return, the Queen bade her defender hasten to the aid of Edward, and give him the welcome tidings of her safety: to Lorenzo he confided the care of the castle; and with Raymond de Valence and his followers, hastened to Berwick. On their route they fell in with a herd of bisons: with his javelin Reginald struck one between the horns, and the shaggy beast rolled at his feet.

"A good omen!" cried Raymond.

"I never saw a fiercer-looking animal," said Reginald.

"What think you," rejoined De Valence, "of a man who can overthrow such a beast by seizing his horns? The Scots have such a man; he saved Robert Bruce, and they call him Turnbull."

Nothing further occurred until they arrived at Berwick, where every one was talking of an expected combat between a giant and the young Benhale. The armies were drawn out, and the combat commenced. Advancing towards his enemy, who was no other than the mighty Turnbull, Ben-

hale was attacked by a large mastiff, but he cut the dog in twain and passed on. The giant swung his massive club high in air, and Reginald almost shuddered as the weapon fell on the ground; but, to his surprise, instead of the destruction of Benhale, he saw one of the giant's arms cut off by the active youth.

The rage of Turnbull was increased by the pain he suffered, and he made another mighty effort: the club again struck the earth; and, almost at the same moment, before the feet of Benhale lay the head of his opponent; for, leaping on his bending adversary, he had, with the aid of both his hands, decapitated the giant. The trunk for a moment retained its position, and then fell forward, while the shouts of the English proclaimed their champion victorious. A body of Scots rushed forward to seize the gallant youth, who had fought so fairly and so bravely: Reginald watched their movements; and, dashing in with his knights, released Benhale from the host of enemies which surrounded him, and brought him before the King, who knighted him on the instant.

"Thou hast fought valiantly, Sir Robert," said Edward, "and the fall of this their champion gives us good omen of the fall of the King of Scotland." Reginald was sent by the King to defy the Scots to battle, and each army drew up in four divisions: Raymond de Valence was stationed in the advance. The archers plied their bows manfully, but the inexperienced soldiers were thrown into confusion, and Raymond was surrounded. Reginald saw the danger, and hastened to restore the fortune of the day: the troops fought hand to hand: Lord Archibald Douglas himself led the valiant Scots. Reginald attacked their gallant leader, and drove his spear through his body. The confusion now became general. Lord John d'Arcy, with the Irish troops, and King Edward, with a chosen band of knights, encompassed the fugitives, and thousands were either slain or made prisoners. Edward entered Berwick, declared Baliol King of Scotland, and made Lord Henry Percy the governor of the town.

Raymond de Valence loudly proclaimed his gratitude to De Vavasour; and the King, taking the

latter by the hand, presented his friend to the nobles and warriors of England, as Earl of Ulleswater. To Robert d'Artois the King gave the honors and estates of the Earldom of Richmond. "For a pacific ambassador from a Pope," cried Edward to Reginald, "you use a sword surprisingly: but, it is not your hand I would praise, but your head, my brave Earl! and now the deeds are ready with our chancellor, and the castle and forests are yours. By our good faith, the Bishop has well valued your holdings: if he were to get his tithe, he would be excellently paid for his trouble. Come here, Henry Percy! take this Earl's hand, and swear friendship to him and his: he shall aid you in keeping down these turbulent Scots. By our good saint, they shall find us as willing as my grandfather to meet their broad swords."

Reginald sent Hawkwood with letters to the Retreat, and to conduct his Countess to her new abode, which Lady Mary Percy, at the desire of the Queen, prepared for her reception.

CHAP. LXXIX.

ULLESWATER.

THE military arrangements being finished, and Berwick strongly fortified, the King removed to Ulleswater. On a steep point of rock, embosomed in wood, stood the ancient castle: the view was bounded by lofty mountains, and the eye rested on a beautiful mixture of green, brown, and blue, displayed in rich foliage, with colored heath and transparent water. Here Queen Philippa met her beloved and victorious lord. "These wilds are romantic, Reginald!" said the King; "but you will like them better than the rich lands; for, by St. George! I think the cunning churchman knew as well as ourselves who was to be the purchaser. You would have done better to bargain with me. You say you are rich: we are poor; for our treasury was, like our troops, in bad order. We have involved ourselves in a war likely to be of

some duration, and possibly the forerunner of another still more serious."

"You have well begun, sire," answered the new-made earl; "and, possessing Berwick, you can establish yourself on the frontiers, and either attack or defend with facility. A march to Edinburgh may be easily performed."

"We look forward to such an event," rejoined the royal Edward. "You remember my determination to join the crown of Scotland to that of England; but I find it is not so easy a matter. Baliol will, however, serve our purpose better than our brother-in-law. I yielded to Queen Isabel; but found that if I made our sister the instrument of ruling Scotland, the nobles would accuse her as a traitor to the interests of the kingdom. This affair of Halidon gives me hopes; but as yet our troops have not that discipline necessary to subdue the hardy valour of the Scots. If the people rebel against Baliol, who has done homage to us, we must advance." Having surveyed the surrounding country, and given his orders for future movements, the King, with Philippa and Robert d'Ar-

tois, left the castle of Ulleswater for that of Alnwick, and Reginald awaited the arrival of Matilde.

The trumpets announced the approach of the Countess. Reginald hastened to receive and embrace his wife: he turned with an air of triumph to the noble building full in her view, and exclaimed: "Now indeed I feel worthy of the lovely hand I hold." When they entered the castle, Reginald continued: "The King has promised to return, my Matilde! and, with his Queen, to be present at the grand festival now preparing under their directions, and at which you are to be presented to your new vassals: my seneschal is busy in forming them in military array, for we are to become borderers."

"Are we never to live in peace, my husband? I almost envy Aurélie the tranquillity of Roussillon."

"And a quiet husband, like your brother Agenor."

"No; I am quite satisfied with the husband I have, and only wish to live for him."

Reginald having poured forth certain rapturous expressions, accompanied by caresses, continued thus :—" You must prepare your finest apparel, and look like a Princess of Hainault."

" And you like a Prince of France, and an Earl of England." Reginald sighed, and brushed away a few large drops which seemed to burst through the eye-lashes that endeavoured to restrain them. " My dear husband," pursued Matilde, " I did not intend to pain you by my remark : you have a right to be proud of the blood of the father which flows in your veins ; and, believe me, the world will not cast shame on you for being so descended."

" You cannot wipe away the stain of my birth, Matilde ! Had my mother been simply a Countess, she would have committed only a single sin !— but it does not become a son to condemn his parents."

" No, Reginald ! and remember that the sin was atoned for by bitter penitence, and the error of a moment, (for such I believe it to have been,) expiated by years of fidelity and obedience.

How different such conduct from that of those who receive the caresses of their husbands, and persuade them of their love; yet basely admit others to the claim of blood with their tainted offspring."

"Such conduct adds treachery and hypocrisy to adultery. My mother was too honorable to be so far guilty."

"I truly grieve, my Reginald! to be the cause of so much grief on the day of my first visit to this enchanting place; but we are older in mind than years, and too often indulge in reflections upon humanity, instead of enjoying life as it is. I have gained my experience from books on past ages; you from intercourse with society. We both remark the follies and wickedness of the world; I from comparing what I hear *is*, with what I know *has been*: whilst you, by comparing the people of all countries one with another, find out that, whether in France, England, Avignon, or Rome, the story is still the same, and human frailty stronger than religion or morality."

CHAP. LXXX.

THE LAKE.

On entering the grand hall, the Earl and Countess were greeted by Lorenzo, who had, with Eleonore, arrived from London on important business requiring an immediate interview with the King, who was hourly expected.

Edward was faithful to his promise, and arrived with Philippa, accompanied by Robert d'Artois, young Henry Percy and his wife. The banks of the lake were to be the scene of festivity, and rude steps were cut in the rock, fenced with balustrades of oak, in order to enable the royal party to descend. The vassals were formed in order of procession, and were to advance upon the lighting-up of a bonfire as a signal. The party took their seats in the gaily-decorated boats: musicians played soft airs. The chamberlain conducted the King and Queen to the tent, over which floated the royal

standard. A semicircle was formed by columns entwined with roses, and on either flank were two tents: over one waved the banners of Ulleswater, Montserrent, Montauban, and San Germano; over the other those of Hainault, Montleans, and Auxerrois.

The procession commenced. First walked, or rather danced, the younger children, with bunches of heath in their little hands; the youths and maidens followed, and then the peasants and their wives. The music changed. A curious group of sportsmen appeared, among whom was Hobson, mounted on a tame deer, who appeared, by the tossing of his horns, and the bounds of his feet, to partake of the general joy. Again the music changed to a quick march, and the archers of Ulleswater defiled from the valley through which the procession had passed from the hamlet. The setting sun shone on their arms; and in the centre Sir George Hawkwood appeared, gallantly armed, and mounted on his war-horse. The procession was closed by the ancient retainers of the house of Hainault, who were in the service of the Queen;

and the whole formed a semicircle facing the royal tent. A loud clash of trumpets and cymbals drew all attention; and Edward led forth the Earl, while Philippa appeared at the same moment, with his blushing Countess. The vassals knelt as the King and Queen passed down the line; and when Reginald and Matilde reached their tents, they separately received the homage of their male and female dependents. Tables were spread as if by magic, and when the feasting was over, as speedily removed. The dance then commenced; in which Hobson attracted the notice of the Queen, who was highly amused by his exertions: the youths were exhilarated by the drinking and exercise, and proposed that Hobson should return to the castle in one of the broad-bottomed boats, mounted triumphantly on his stag. The frolic was agreed to by Hobson, and the boat was paddled off amid the cheers of the people. The bonfires lit up the hills,—the music echoed through the woods,—and the shouts of the men were as strong and repeated as mountain lungs and mountain spirits could produce. Whether some persons maliciously pricked

the deer with a javelin, or that he took fright, no one could tell; but he jumped over the side of the boat, and disappeared from the view of the party on shore. The suspense did not last long: the noble animal re-appeared, with Hobson on his back, holding on by a wreath of oak which passed round his neck. As the stag made near the land, it appeared evident that Hobson was not master of his reason: he threw himself backwards and forwards, his head came in contact with the horns of the stag, and, with a loud exclamation, he fell into the water. Reginald plunged in; and, as Hobson rose the third time, his master seized him by his matted locks, and dragged him towards the shore. As he swam along, a javelin was thrown with great force into the water, but unknown to all save Reginald.

Hawkwood hastened to aid in restoring the unfortunate groom to life, and his efforts were finally successful.

CHAP. LXXXI.

AN INVITATION.

REGINALD retired to his own apartment, to change his dripping habiliments; and, as his pages and squires removed them, and supplied others worthy of the visitors who honored his hall, the Earl ruminated on what had passed. "The misfortune of the deer," thought he, "was not accidental: the same hand which aimed at the life of the master was the villanous cause of the servant's danger; but if I inquire, Matilde will be alarmed; she will consider the accident as ominous; but the recovery of poor Hobson should save her from drawing any dismal conclusions." Reginald was piously grateful for his escape, and for his having been the instrument of saving the life of a fellow-creature.

The party at the castle was increased by the arrival of the Prince and Princess de Rougemont,

with Agenor and Aurélie; and all was joy and festivity. Reginald was for hours on horseback with the King, viewing the neighbouring country, and encouraging the vassals of Ulleswater to perform their necessary feats of arms previously to their march.

We will not delay in describing the preparations for war, but proceed to the invitation of Lord Percy and Lady Mary to be present at the baptism of their son. This ceremony was to be performed by the Bishop of Durham; and the King and Queen, with all the guests of Ulleswater, removed to Alnwick. The princely hospitality of the house of Percy was never more fully displayed than on the present occasion: the train of Matilde was absolutely regal; and certainly so many specimens of female loveliness have seldom been seen, as appeared, in all the varieties of hue and expression, to form the rainbow of beauty that illumed the hall of Alnwick. The Bishop had not arrived, which enabled Edward to converse on his merits. "We are invited to the palace of Durham," said his Highness; "but I think Richard de Bury

will do the hospitalities of his noble house with greater freedom, ourselves not being present. I understand he lives in princely state, and that he is esteemed by persons of all ranks: his hare-hounds are highly spoken of; and there is a story current in our court, that the first congratulations of a brother Bishop were made to him after this fashion: 'His Holiness, Pope John, has done as much service to the church in recommending our good Lord Richard de Bury to the see palatinate of Durham, as he did harm by his discussions and doctrines. Accept, my Lord Bishop, my high consideration, and my prayers for your welfare; and if, in return for these, your lordship would deign to send me six couple of your far-famed hounds, for which my heart yearns, my bodily health will be re-established, and my mental vigour thereby reinforced, for the welfare of our parent the church, and the service of the puissant Prince Bishop of Durham.'"

"A very ecclesiastical letter, truly, sire!" observed the Earl of Ulleswater: "and was this yearning Bishop nominated by your Highness?"

"No, Reginald! the church may thank Earl

Mortimer for that prop: the Bordeaux he drinks makes him require hard exercise, and the exercise in return requires wine; and the wine and the exercise inspire him to forget some of his vows,—and among those forgotten they reckon chastity as one: but of charity his Excellence is brimfull! His purse is open to the poor, and his house to the traveller; the lower clergy have a friend and protector, and the higher a monitor, and, if necessary, a punisher. Of his errors, where beauty is concerned, we only know by report; for the Bishop hides his failings from the public eye: so we will not judge too harshly, where no accusation is substantiated:—but here comes our Queen, with your fair Countess. Long may you both live to receive fresh honors, and reap the harvest of good deeds!"

"And show," added Reginald, "our gratitude to our royal friends. To you, sire, I owe honor and service, as Lord of Guienne; and loyalty, as King of England: I owe you affection, as being honored by becoming akin to your beautiful Queen; and I owe you homage for the lands."

"Do not proceed any further with your list of

debts," interposed the King; "or I shall consider myself a usurer, having offered principal in the hope of obtaining unreasonable interest."

The Bishop of Durham, with a noble train, now appeared; and in the evening the baptismal ceremony was performed with great splendor.

On the following morning, Matilde complained to her lord of having passed a restless and feverish night, and of dreaming that she stood under a fig-tree, whose fruit dropped blood, which fell upon her and her husband. "For Heaven's sake, Reginald!" continued she, "delay your visit to the palace of Durham until we all can travel together."

"I have promised, my love! to assist the Bishop in providing for the reception of royalty: you may make a delay of two days, by proposing a visit to Warkworth, but on the fifth the King sets out." This plan was carried into execution, and all except Matilde were delighted with the beauty of the scenery. Her thoughts were too much engrossed by her dream to allow her to enter into the joy of the passing hours, and the forebodings

of evil cast a deep gloom over her mind. On the third day Reginald pressed Matilde to his heart, and she remained folded in his arms, as if unwilling to release him: her natural presence of mind, however, returned, as Reginald said, "It is misery to part, when each hour impresses on our ear the dangers of war; but in times of peace, a knight may hunt the timid hare, or drink refreshing Bordeaux in an episcopal hall, without danger to himself, or fear to those he loves. Come, Matilde! prove yourself worthy of the race to which you belong."

"There are reasons why I am now more than usually timid," replied she; "and as I am not sure of my happiness, I will not create hopes that may be destroyed."

CHAP. LXXXII.

THE FIG-TREE.

Earl Reginald was treated by his friend and brother ambassador with that open-hearted warmth, which his acquired dignity had not made Richard de Bury forget: the hounds supported their character, and all was gaiety and hospitality. The preparations for Edward's reception were concluded, and a banquet given in especial honor of the Earl of Ulleswater, on the day before the expected arrival of the King.

It was the custom at the palace on public days, as it has been in later times, to admit all strangers who presented themselves: among others, a knight of commanding stature and overawing mien, attended by a small suite, was introduced as a Danish nobleman travelling through England. On his breast he wore a decoration resembling a cluster of stars: Reginald fancied the stranger was known to him; but as no presentation ensued, they took

their seats in silence opposite each other—the foreigner receiving this distinction, as his followers called him Prince. When the fruits were placed upon the table, among other luxuries were some very fine figs, the juice of which was of a deep blood-red colour. The conversation turned upon these. "The tree was sent to me," observed the Prelate, "by our good friend, King Robert of Naples: it is much esteemed." Without seeming conscious of the impropriety and want of politeness towards others, the stranger-knight proceeded to devour one after another in an impatient way. Reginald remarked this to Lorenzo, who sat beside him. "I think," said he, "the Dane ought to beware of the fate of Ausonius, lest he also die of a surfeit."

"Does Reginald de Vavasour," exclaimed the unknown guest, "dare to slander me with the name of glutton?"

"Reginald de Vavasour," replied our hero, "Earl, Prince, Marquis, Count, and knight, dares to avouch that he is no slanderer!"

The stranger-knight started up and laid his hand

on his sword, whilst Reginald remained in his seat.

"We are the guests," exclaimed Lorenzo, "of the good Lord Bishop, and must not now disturb the pleasure of his hospitable board; but," leaning across the table, "if the knight of the avengeful aspect be as fond of spear, battle-axe, and sword, as he is of figs, his appetite may be easily satisfied." The knight threw his glove across the table, and left the hall: the Bishop retired; Reginald sat as if nothing had occurred; and the jester endeavoured to turn the matter into ridicule. "I'll tell you, lords!" said he, "all about figs and their dangers: it is not a new story: it comes as far off as from Adam and Eve.

SONG.

'When the world was first made, but not people,—you know
From a compound of dust Father Adam did spring;—
He'd dumb creatures for subjects, who homage did show;
And Adam was General, Bishop, and King.

'These are names very fine, and 'tis fine to be walking
Amongst flowers and fruits, and such beauties of nature;
But we know it is pleasanter far to be talking
To that frail thing, a woman, of beautiful stature.

'So from Adam's stout rib a sweet creature was form'd:
From the samples we have, we her charms may believe:
The first man awoke, and by beauty was storm'd:
He called her his Queen, his beloved, his Eve.

'There was one tree forbidden,—a fig as I say;—
We have heard that from tasting Ausonius did die:
Eve tasted the fruit on a tempting fine day,
And for sake of us all with her Adam did lie.

'The tree was forbidden: therefore she wish'd to taste:
The advice was the devil's—and Satan deceives:
Eve saw they were naked; so down from her waist
She her nakedness covered with twenty fig-leaves.'"

The chamberlain of the household was startled by the jester's song: he declared it was highly improper for the palace of a Bishop. The fool replied:—"My master is as much of a temporal as of a spiritual Prince: he has a right to go in armour to the wars if he pleases; and, I tell you what! he may keep a seraglio if he choose: besides, he has a right to keep fools in his house, by which means you and I find ourselves here. I own I am a fool for interfering in a quarrel: I wanted to drive out the memory of high words about foolish things, by singing foolish words about high things, and you are fool enough to quarrel with me for my

good deeds." The chamberlain, from the applause of those in the hall, began to think the jester was in the right; and, instead of ordering him any punishment, presented a flagon of wine. The jester drank to his health, and amendment of temper.

Earl Reginald considered he had remained sufficiently long with the guests assembled to do him honor; and having addressed a few words, drank to their health, and retired.

CHAP. LXXXIII.

THE STEEL BOW.

Reginald was met by the chamberlain, and conducted to the Bishop. "I most deeply regret," said the Prelate, "that any man, much less a knight and a nobleman, should conduct himself as this Danish Prince has done: but I trust you will take no further notice until our sovereign arrives; then, if it so please you, demand an open court; and may God and the justice of your cause protect you! but otherwise I have my fears."

"You need have no fears for me," replied the Earl, "except from treachery."

"It is that I dread; and if you are headstrong, it is against that I must guard."

"It grieves me to appear headstrong; but, my esteemed friend! the fact is so apparent, that a man must be wilfully blind or coldly cautious not to perceive the bent of the stranger's mind. The feast was in compliment to me; the figs you wished to draw my attention to, and therefore the stranger devoured them: he forced me to observe his conduct, and proved he knew me well;—knew I would resent the manner of his address: in short, he was determined to quarrel, and I am as determined to fight. I pray you, pardon me: I must not appear what I am not—a coward."

"Nor am I a coward, Reginald! though a churchman, I have military power, and would take the field as well as our brother of Lincoln. All I ask is one day's delay."

"And then fight at outrance in the very presence of my wife? No, my Lord Bishop! no!"

When the Earl retired, Lorenzo brought him a

demand of single combat from the Dane; the Druid's oak, the place; break of day, the time; and two attendants. Lorenzo and Hawkwood were the friends of the Earl, and they followed him fully armed: but the attendants of the challenger wore their usual habiliments. One of them advanced to Lorenzo. "We have no enmity," said he, "with the Count de Lunheim. The Count de Sterndorff demands his glove from the Earl of Ulleswater."

"Give it, Sir George," said Lorenzo; "and before another word is exchanged, the Count must retract what he has uttered: the expression 'dare' suits not the ear of a knight."

"The Count will not retract one syllable."

"Then, gentlemen," cried De Lunheim, "take your stations, with your backs towards that tree."

Lorenzo held a white scarf on the point of his spear, and as it dropped to the ground, the knights rushed forward. They met with the force of wild bulls: Gondibert, on which the Earl was mounted, fell dead, and his master rolled on the ground covered with blood. The victorious knight leaped

from his horse, threw up his vizor, and exclaimed, "Remember the wild boar!" He then remounted; and, throwing down a packet on the ground, addressed to the Countess Matilde, with the name of Theodric on the cover, he galloped off, leaving on the ground the order of seven stars.

The four knights carried the wounded Earl to the oak. Trumpets announced a body of the Prince Bishop's troops. As they galloped up, Lorenzo turned towards them: a rustling noise was heard in the branches, and a small steel bow, of foreign workmanship, fell on the ground.

"Treachery!" shouted Lorenzo; "treachery!" re-echoed Hawkwood. "Ascend the tree," cried the former. A groan was soon heard, and a lifeless body fell to the ground, crushing the branches in its course. Lorenzo ran to the spot where Gondibert lay. There was a small hole on the side of the eye nearest to them, and a leech declared it to have been the cause of the animal's death. "It could not," added he, "have been from the knight's spear, for that passed through the bars of the Earl's vizor, and has inflicted the

wound. The body of the fallen traitor was examined, and some iron missiles found in his vest, which corresponded with the size of the wound. "Hawkwood," said Lorenzo, "bear our beloved Lord to the castle: by St. Maurice and all good saints, I will revenge him!" The attendants were made prisoners. Lorenzo galloped off. As the mournful procession reached the outer gate, the train of Edward were passing over the drawbridge. The court-yard was filled with nobles, knights, and ladies. The Prince Bishop was in waiting. Edward and Albert de Rougemont were in the act of assisting the Countess Matilde to alight from her palfrey, when an officer reported to the chamberlain the event of the morning. He unguardedly exclaimed:—"God of mercy protect us all! The friend of our Lord Bishop, the favored of sovereigns, the admiration of the valorous, the brave Prince Reginald, Earl of Ulleswater, is slain!"

The Countess dropped lifeless into Edward's arms, and was borne by the afflicted monarch to her chamber.

CHAP. LXXXIV.

PREPARATIONS FOR DEATH.

LORENZO now galloped into the court. "Where," said he, "is my beloved lord?—where is the Countess?" No one could answer: all was grief, confusion, and dismay. Servants were seen hurrying in different directions; nobles and officers, in groups, discussed the cause of the fatal event, and each had a different story. Lorenzo made his way to the chamber in which lay Matilde, her pallid cheek resting on the shoulder of the Queen. "The assassin, Theodric," exclaimed he, "is no more." Matilde opened her eyes, and ravingly exclaimed, "Where is that monster, who swore never to see me the wife of another?"

"The remains of the Count de Sterndorff," rejoined Lorenzo, "will be brought to this castle, but of Theodric you need now have no fear."

"Then, my Reginald!" cried the lovely sufferer.

" we may still be happy." Matilde closed her eyes, and fell back on the couch. The men retired, and left the afflicted lady surrounded by her anxious female friends. Lorenzo entered the chamber of De Vavasour. " My friend," said he, " I have revenged your cause; but the death of a million such as the assassin Theodric could not atone for the loss of such a knight as the Earl of Ulleswater."

" This is no time," replied the dying Prince, " to talk of revenge. Would that I had fallen in the field of honor! but it is too late for wishes. The little strength I have must be employed in confession: send the King's chaplain to me:—no, I am not a true son of Rome! he will not listen: leave me with the Bishop; and may God reward you for your fidelity to your friend, and forgive you this act of revenge!"

" He met too honorable a death," rejoined Lorenzo: " the executioner should have finished such a villain." Lorenzo burst into tears, and retired.

" You are aware, De Bury, of my opinions," said De Vavasour, " I trust I am a sincere Christ

ian. Cut off as I am in the enjoyment of all earthly happiness, (for the prospect of an heir to my name was alone wanting, and that has almost been assured to me,) I may grieve, but yet I forgive my enemies. To you I will freely confess my sins, and avow my long-existing sorrow for having committed them. My only hope is, that through the promised mediation, the few good actions I have been permitted to perform may counterbalance some of the bad; and that the follies of youth, and the want of parental counsel, may be admitted as palliatives for others. I have never wilfully been guilty of a wicked action; but I must not venture to speak in my own praise."

"My son," replied the Bishop, "your good deeds, both public and private, are numerous, and will be recorded in the book of life: as for those sins of which you speak, too many would consider them venial errors; and your true repentance, with the tears of your good angel, will, I trust, wash them out from record against you."

The Prince de Rougemont entered. "Now, my friend," said Reginald, "for worldly affairs!

The boy Regius is, I believe, my son: Matilde will protect and provide for him: if she has a child, as we expect, it will inherit all we possess; if not, I leave the disposition to my wife. Montauban, in default of issue, reverts to the crown of France. In my jewel-case, you will find a schedule of what I possess, and of the legacies which I bequeath to my friends. Now let me sleep awhile, for my eye-lids are weary, and I wish to possess as much strength as possible to meet the moment that is to part me from all I love!" The Bishop retired; and while her husband slept, Matilde, with Angelina de Rougemont, took their station near his couch.

CHAP. LXXXV.

THE CONCLUSION.

Reginald awoke after a long trance much refreshed; Hawkwood and Patience were in waiting with the medical attendants; for exhausted Nature had compelled Matilde to retire to her couch. Reginald made a sign for some liquid; and after drinking, the senior physician felt his pulse; and Hawkwood, who kept his eye fixed on the leech, saw the signs which were interchanged between him and his assistants. The learned doctor wrote a note, which he sent by Patience to her lady's room, while the eye of Reginald followed her retreating steps. The doctor now poured out some cordial from a small phial, which the knight swallowed, and said,—"May I not see the Countess? for my strength is much restored;—the throbbing in my head, and fluttering at my heart, have ceased."

"Noble Lord of Ulleswater," said the leech, with slow and measured words, "it is true, that the awful symptoms of approaching dissolution have subsided: the brain is not injured: while you slept, we have probed the wound; and we find that a great part of the disorder under which the frame labours, was caused by the violent concussion produced by the falling of the noble animal on which your Highness rode. It is therefore our opinion, that restoratives may be safely applied: the loss of blood was considerable; the weakness therefrom naturally great; and the fears of the noble lady, your Countess, equally strong and natural: but Nature will now exert herself, and we pronounce favorably of the symptoms. I and my companions will now retire and partake of some refreshments, as well as some sleep; for we have watched this restoration patiently for thirty-six hours."

Reginald was relieved from further discourse by the departure of those present, and by the entry of Matilde. The note forwarded by the leech had cheered her drooping spirits, and the warm

blood which flowed in her veins gave animation to her lovely features. She appeared like the brilliant orb of day, dispelling the clouds of night; and bringing from its silvery bed the bright influence of Hope, to cheer the face of nature!

Matilde threw herself on her knees, and exclaimed:—"Thank Heaven, my prayers have been heard; my beloved husband will be restored to me: I feel a confidence in the goodness of Providence, and I will banish from my mind the prophecies of the Saxon. Live, my Reginald! live to embrace the child, of which I shall be the happy mother, and for which, and for all other blessings, I am humbly grateful."

"I think, my Matilde! that my life will be spared. If I recover, you shall be my monitress for life; I will cultivate the arts of peace, and study to diffuse happiness around us: I will endeavour to be the mediator between the rival monarchs, and unite in the bands of friendship those whom the bands of wedlock have allied in blood."

"Although your words bring rapture to my

heart," replied the Countess, "yet must my tongue persuade you to be silent. Here is fruit, my love! it will refresh you:" then kissing her husband's cheek, she added:—"Praised be Heaven, the fever has left you. O Reginald, we shall yet be happy: Theodric is no more: his remains were last night interred in unsanctified ground; his spear, sword, and spurs, broken by the executioner; and he awaits his doom before the eternal throne, unblessed by holy men, despised by warriors, and execrated by the people, who truly love the noble De Vavasour."

Matilde having held to his lips the goblet which contained what the doctor called "Nature's Restorer," again seated herself by the side of his couch, and listened to occasional observations on various topics, which proved that, although the body was weak, the mind was still strong. When Reginald was sufficiently restored to strength, the learned leech permitted him to be removed to another chamber which had been prepared under the immediate superintendence of Matilde, and where

he received his friends, who hailed with delight the prospect of his speedy recovery. In due time, the convalescent was permitted to breathe the fresh air of heaven, and carried in a horse-litter through the beautiful groves which surrounded the palace.

King Edward had been called away; and the Prince de Rougemont was anxious to return to his hereditary possessions, as his hopes of an heir to his honors seemed rationally founded. Reginald was removed to his castle of Ulleswater, where Matilde gave birth to a son, who was called Alfred Edward; and on recovery from her confinement, she was folded in the arms of her much-loved Reginald, restored to all his former health and strength, and presenting to her enraptured eyes the form of beauty and the soul of beneficence.

Lorenzo and Eleonore, with Rosalie and her husband, were generally resident at Ulleswater. Petrarch continued to sigh after Laura, and La Vicomtesse to laugh at and with all the gay

nobles of Avignon: but, here we must drop the curtain, wishing—

> 'To all, and each, a fair good night,
> And pleasing dreams, and slumbers light!"

THE END.

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